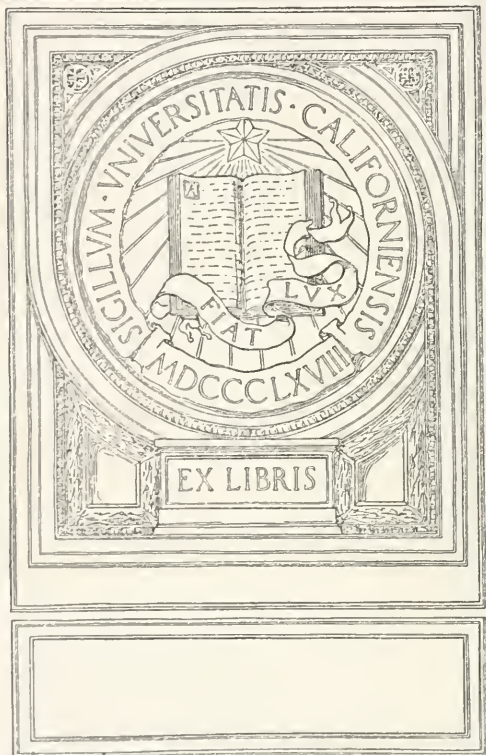


A
A
0
0
0
3
7
3
6
5
4
3



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AT LOS ANGELES



s/c has



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

Harper's Stereotype Edition.

ANASTASIUS;

OR,

MEMOIRS OF A GREEK.

WRITTEN AT THE

CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY J. & J. HARPER, 82 CLIFF-ST.

Sold by Collins & Hannay, Collins & Co., G. & C. & H. Carvill, White, Gal-
laher, & White, O. A. Roorbach, Pendleton & Hill, E. Bliss, and C. S.
Francis;—ALBANY, O. Steele, and Little & Cummings;—PHILADELPHIA,
John Grigg, Towar & Hogan, E. L. Carey & A. Hart, and T. Desilver, jr.;
—BOSTON, Richardson, Lord, & Holbrook, and Carter, Hendee, & Babcock;
—BALTIMORE, W. & J. Neal, J. Jewett, Cushing & Sons, McDowell & Son,
E. J. Coale, and P. N. Wood.

1831.

PR
4803
H4 a

ANASTASIUS. V. 2

CHAPTER I.

26 1/2 1/4 2

THE paroxysm of fever which seized me at Chio, had, in the hurry of the strange and rapidly succeeding events which it gave rise to, been entirely forgotten. I was therefore surprised, when, on board the ship, I experienced a second attack more violent than the first; and was still more mortified when I found that, so far from being allowed to drop the acquaintance, I had thenceforth to consider the unwelcome intruder as my regular guest. His visits were repeated with most irksome punctuality every third day during the whole of the passage; and this passage seemed to have no end.

Oh! how long appeared those sleepless nights, in which I felt no change of motion in the ship but what was caused by its rolling from side to side, or pitching from end to end; in which every object suspended round my narrow berth—my clothes, my lamp, my person, and the very shadow they cast on the wainscot—never ceased rocking from right to left, and from left to right; obeying an impulse as resistless as it was monotonous, and which found its equally monotonous response in the periodical creaking of the hulk, straining of the mast, swaying of the yards, and flapping of the sails and tackle. How slowly approached those mornings which were neither announced by the crowing of the cock, nor hailed by the twittering of the swallow, and whose dead and universal silence was only broken by our own harsh discord, added to that of the howling winds, and roaring waves! How often I anxiously looked out at my narrow loophole, to see whether the stars had yet lost their trembling radiance, and whether the horizon yet reddened with the approaching dawn! My mind suffered with my body; and during those tedious hours, the depression of disease made me survey with deep contrition the errors of days past, and form sincere resolutions for my future life.

They lasted with unremitting continuance—until health and strength returned.

This happened at Cyprus. That island which gives agues to so many, cured my tertian completely; or perhaps transferred it to some other luckless wight, opportunely in the way to catch it as it left me. I was, however, only just convalescent, and had scarce left my bed, when, from the heights above Larneca, Hassan's armament was descried five or six leagues out at sea, in full sail for Egypt. That fleet, which I had so long expected, now cleft the wave almost under my eyes, without my being able to join it.

Fortunately I had another string to my bow.—But ere I proceed to tell by which way I returned to the land of the mamlukes, I must premise a few words concerning what happened there after my departure.

I have already mentioned, I think, that in Aly-bey's time, an alliance had been proposed between Petersburg and Cairo. This project the autocratrix of all the Russias failed not to resume as soon as she saw Ibrahim and Mourad in firm possession of the supreme authority. Her wish was to obtain from the beys the port of Alexandria; an object of the greatest importance to her future maritime operations against the Turks. In return, she offered to afford these turbulent leaders every assistance in their design of shaking off the yoke of the sultan; and the Russian consul-general at Alexandria, Thonus by name, was intrusted with the negotiation. He had the facility of corresponding with the rulers of Cairo through the medium of a Russian subject, become a renegade, a mamluke, and a bey, under the appellation of Khassim: but he had in opposition to him the consuls of the other European powers in Egypt, who, whether friendly to the Porte or not, were all alike hostile to the plan of giving up to the Russians so important a harbour as Alexandria. Thonus undertook to defeat their opposition by the simple expedient of removing their persons. A petty quarrel had arisen between Mourad and the consuls respecting some trifling repairs to the Latin hospice at Alexandria. This spark the crafty Livonian contrived to fan into so furious a blaze, that the consuls no longer thought themselves safe on land, and determined to take refuge at sea. Their intention was to embark in a body for Constantinople. Meantime, Ibrahim, alarmed at the consequences of the dispute, sent them an express, to efface by his

concessions the sins of his colleague ; and already were the consuls on board and in the act of weighing anchor, when the exulting Thonus had the mortification to see them return on shore, and resume their situations.

Ibrahimi's conciliatory measures, however, came too late to prevent the interference of the Porte. On the first blush of the business, the consuls, apprehensive of violence on the part of the beys, had despatched an express to lay their violation of the imperial hatti-shef before the sultan ; and Abd-ool-Hamed had determined to resent the insult offered by the rulers of Egypt to the strangers under his special protection in an exemplary manner. Had it suited the convenience of the Porte to remain at peace with its vassals, the representatives of all the potentates of Europe flogged round Mourad's hall would have obtained no other redress than an exhortation to a mutual forgiveness of injuries ; but the divan wished to humble the rebellious beys, and it would hear of no atonement on their part. Anxious as the consuls again became, when rid of their personal apprehensions, to prevent a rupture most injurious to their interests, they wrote to assure the ministers that they had been in too great a hurry to take flight, that they had entirely forgiven every injury committed, and that they wished for nothing but the restoration of peace and harmony.—They wrote in vain ! Hassan, capitan-pasha, who in his diversified expeditions had never yet had an opportunity of exploring the fertile plains of Egypt, expected them to afford so plentiful a harvest, if not of laurels, at least of piastres, that he could not suffer the affair to be patched up ; and under Abd-ool-Hamed, the wishes of this favourite were law. The divan, in answer to the pacific protestations of the consuls, only observed that they were much too lenient, and must have satisfaction in spite of themselves ; and thereupon proclaimed the beys outlaws ; and ordered an armament to be fitted out against them. A show of negotiation, however, was kept up, which had to a certain degree succeeded in lulling asleep the apprehensions of the mamlukes, when, on the 6th of July, 1786, the squadron which I had beheld with longing eyes from the coast of Cyprus, appeared before Alexandria.

The keys of that port had been kept for Hassan by his reala-bey,* Hammamdee-Ogloo, who commanded the

* Reala-bey—the second in command in the Turkish navy, after the capitan-pasha.

grand signor's caravellas, stationed before Alexandria, Rosetta, and Damiat, to collect the duties on the outgoing vessels. Hassan's force consisted of six ships of the line, four frigates, and some gunboats, and forty or fifty kirlangitsches and other small craft, capable of going up the river to Cairo, commanded by a Turk of Stanchio, called Tchelebi-Zadê. These vessels carried six hundred chosen Arnoots from the interior of Epirus, as brave as well armed, and about five thousand raw recruits, from every corner of the Archipelago, possessed of neither arms, courage, nor discipline. To this small force the grand-admiral added at Alexandria about three thousand mangarbees, or barbaresques, very lightly equipped. Of cavalry, the species of troops most wanted against the mamlukes, Hassan's armament was entirely destitute; but the Asiatic pashas of Oorfa, of Haleb, of Trabloos, and others, had been ordered to bring with all expedition from their respective governments more horse than were wanted to Belbeïs, there to await the grand-admiral's further orders.

No sooner was Hassan-pasha disembarked in Egypt, than hastening by land to Rosetta, where his boats joined him, he sent orders to the Asiatics to advance from Belbeïs to the point of the Delta.

This measure, however, experienced some difficulty, inasmuch as the pasha of Oorfa was not arrived yet at the place of rendezvous, and all the others had, immediately after Hassan's departure from Constantinople, been countermanded entirely. The ministers were in daily expectation of a war in the north, and felt unwilling to waste all their resources in the south.

Hassan, thus disappointed, resolved to compensate for want of numbers by celerity of movements, and began to ascend the Nile on the last day of July. The land troops marched along the banks of the river, while the flotilla advanced abreast with their foremost ranks on the stream.

When the intelligence of the capitan-pasha's operations reached Cairo, the greatest unanimity took place among the beys as to their sense of danger, but the greatest diversity of opinions as to the mode of repelling it. Ibrahim was for submission, Mourad for resistance; and no medium being hit upon between these two extremes, the former retired into the Saïd to avoid the imputation of rebellion, while the latter marched into Lower Egypt to oppose force by force.

The 4th day of August witnessed the meeting of the two armies near Mentoobes. Mourad with his well-mounted mamlukes, all mail without, and all ardour within, felt secure of an easy victory over the grand-admiral's ill equipped foot-soldiers. He had neither taken into his account the artillery they were flanked by on the stream, nor the swamps through which he must march, to attack them on its banks. Received, on his first onset, with a tremendous discharge of cannon from the boats, his troops were immediately thrown into confusion. Even the safety of flight was denied them. Sinking with the weight of their accoutrements up to their horses' bellies into the rice grounds that formed the field of battle, they became motionless, and were slaughtered at pleasure by Hassan's naked infantry, which might have walked on the wind. The few mamlukes that escaped immediately fell back upon Cairo; but finding the gates of the citadel shut against them by the sultan's vizier, they only traversed the city, and joined Ibrahim in Upper Egypt.

Hassan entered without further opposition the defenceless capital, and received the homage of the country. He took up his abode in Ibrahim's palace at Kasr-el-aïni, and conferred on the long-exiled Ismail, come from the Saïd to meet him, his long-vacated office of schaich-el-belled. Djeddawee's more dubious loyalty was less splendidly rewarded; and Yeyen-vizier, the obsequious tool of every party in power, was dismissed from his place: it was reserved for the pasha of Oorfa, conductor of the Asiatic troops.

This personage, Abdi by name, had been pasha of Haleb. Turned out of that city by its janissaries, who relished not his body-guard of Koords and of Turkmen,* he had just been consoled for his loss by the government of Oorfa, when he received orders to march with all the force he could collect from Diarbekeer to Egypt. As nothing had been said about provisions, he resolved to trust for his supplies to the plunder of the districts through which he had to pass; and as he only had to traverse Syria from end to end in its greatest length, he just contrived to

* His body-guard of Koords and of Turkmen—mountainers, of Anadoly, who often carry their tents to a great distance from their native provinces, combine a predatory with a pastoral life, and form the body-guard of the Asiatic pashas, as the mountaineers of Albania form that of the governors of Turkey in Europe.

spend, for want of subsistence, the whole summer on his march. This afforded me at Cyprus the means of making up for the loss of my conveyance to Egypt on board the fleet on my right, by joining the army advancing on my left. A boat conveyed me from Larneca to Trabloos; and thenceforward I found the track of Abdi's troops too distinctly marked by their devastations to miss the way. I however could only overtake the pasha near Nabloos in Palestine, where I reached him in the best possible disposition for glory; that is to say, not valuing life a straw. Had I been inclined to fastidiousness, I might have found some fault with the appearance of my competitors for warlike fame. They pursued its career unencumbered by superfluities. The best equipped among the pasha's troops were his own body-guard of Koordish horse, who, under the denomination of dellis,* only exercised their old trade of banditti, and plundered every friend on their march to the enemy. To this body of about eight hundred men was added another of about six hundred spahees, in very indifferent condition. The infantry was composed of about five hundred maugarbees, who looked as if they could be led to victory by nothing but famine. In fact, this ravenous horde only resembled a swarm of locusts, who suddenly appear in a region as if driven by an evil wind, fall on whatever spot offers the most abundant harvest, devour all its crops, and, when they find nothing further to consume, rise again only to lay waste the fields next in succession. As long as there remained in a place a single article to take away or to devour, the pasha thought not of stirring. The complete denudation of all around him became the signal for departure: but the tents were again pitched in whatever nearest district admitted of the same proceeding. The march was lengthened only when such deserts intervened as offered neither provision nor plunder. Every where, before the approaching army, the inhabitants abandoned their villages, carrying with them all that was portable to the mountains; so that every new region we came to looked as if we had been there already, and left us no means of marking our route but by the destruction of the fixtures; and from the lengthy shape of Syria, and the direction of the march, no district escaped the devastating scourge.

* Dellis—properly madmen; species of troops who in the Turkish army act as the forlorn hope.

Besides the general claim which my former rank in Egypt gave me to the attention of a commander in the pay of the Porte, I carried particular letters to Abdi from the governor of Larneca. Accordingly, I was promised the reversion of whatever eligible appointment might become vacant, and meanwhile stepped into the place of a captain of dellis, most fortunately killed the very morning of my arrival by some peasants in ambush.

On calling over the muster-roll of my corps, I found not a single baïrak* possessed of half its complement of men.—Each was a grand skeleton composed of lesser skeletons; and never did troops at the opening of a campaign more resemble soldiers returning from the wars. This remark, however, I kept to myself. As a new comer, I took it for granted that my predecessor knew what he was about (except indeed when he got killed); and resolved not to begin by breaking through established customs. I quietly pocketed the surplus of the pay, and sold the supernumerary rations; and found I was approved of and liked by all my fellow-officers. We agreed that Hassan would not give us more fighting than was necessary; and it would be wrong to tempt him to imprudences by too martial an appearance. The only thing I took care of was to be well mounted myself. But the horses and accoutrements which I purchased having drained me of most of my remaining cash, I was obliged to draw for my other expenses on the present holder of my kiacheflik—whoever that might be.

At Gaza we made our scanty provisions for the great desert. Very ample ones were left in it for the vultures. Belbeïs saw us arrive at last, not in May, indeed, but in September; and from that place of general rendezvous, where not a soul met us, we marched on to Cairo.

It was here that an edifying scene of mutual astonishment took place, in Hassan at the smallness of our force, and in us at the absolute nothingness of his. In fact, we had never had many more troops, while he had disbanded half the men he brought to pocket their pay.

Nothing could equal the change of scene which Cairo presented from what I had known it before. I had left it a manluka city—I found it a Turkish camp. Every object indicated a change of masters and of regulations. Turkish detachments patrolled the streets, Turkish

* Bairak—company.

pickets occupied the places; and those porticoes of the grandees' palaces which formerly witnessed the mamluks driving away with their naboods the famished Egyptians, now saw the Osmanlees treat the mamluks with scarce more respect. My friend Aly-tchawoosh, whom I had the pleasure of finding with the capitan-pasha—but somewhat impaired in flesh, in spirits, and in brilliancy of appearance—took me to the house where I was billeted. “What,” said I, on seeing it, “am I to lodge with my old acquaintance Sidi-Emin, who had such a praiseworthy horror of usury? and when his friends wanted money, thought nothing of obliging them by buying their old slippers at a hundred piastres in ready cash, so they only, in return, bought his new ones at a thousand, payable in three months!—I shall be glad to shake hands with the worthy man.” “Ah!” cried Aly, “you will only shake hands with his ghost. But that you may make sure of: it stalks about all night as if it were mad.”

And good reason it had for being disturbed. The reader may remember the dreadful famine which I left hanging over Egypt. Emin, on this occasion, was one of the provident. During the years of plenty he had laid by for those of want. But, like the ant, he laboured for himself, and cared not to share his savings with the idle. Though his granaries groaned under their loads of corn, he saw unmoved the thousands of wretches who every day perished with hunger under their very walls. When the bodies of the sufferers choked up the entrances of his storehouses, he still refused to unbar their surly gates, until the corn had reached the exorbitant price fixed by his avarice. This it at last attained—and now, exulting at the thoughts of the millions he should make in a few hours, Emin took his keys, and opened his vaults. But O horror, O dismay! Instead of the mountains of golden wheat he had accumulated, he only beheld heaps of nauseous rottenness. An avenging worm had penetrated into the abodes fortified against famished man! A grub had fattened on the food withheld from the starving wretch! While the clamour of despair resounded without, a loathsome insect had in silence achieved within the work of justice. It had wrought Emin's punishment in darkness, while his crimes shone in the light of heaven! The miser's wealth was destroyed, the monster's hopes were all blasted! At the dire spectacle he uttered not a word. He only a few minutes contemplated the infected

mass with the fixed eye of despair; then fell—fell flat on his face upon the putrid heap. God had smitten him! On raising his prostrate body, life had fled. Like his corn, his frame was become a mass of corruption!

Mavroyeni's former place of drogue-man of the fleet, I had the pleasure to find occupied by his nephew Stephan. This youth's character presented a singularity among Greeks in public situations, wondered at by all, and disapproved of by most—that of being a perfectly honest man. His enemies rejoiced at it, though his friends still kept hoping that he was not too old to mend. Meanwhile, the acquaintance begun between us in the Morea ripened at Cairo into a real mutual regard. I say mutual—for though Stephan did not always think well of my conduct, he valued my sincerity.

The strongest proof of attachment, however, which I received in Egypt, was from my quondam mamlukes, whom I had ceded to Ismail at Es-souan, and now found established with the reinstated schaich-el-belled in the capital. At the time of my flight, they seemed perfectly satisfied with the transfer; and, indeed, had they now thought it incumbent upon them to leave the schaich-el-belled, and return to their old patron, they must have been great losers by the change. But so excessive became, on seeing me again, their generous wrath at thinking I had given up their services, that they could not even bear to remember that they once had belonged to me.

As to the capitan-pasha himself, his memory was more retentive. He not only remembered having seen me in the Morea; he even remembered the proposal he made me after the affair of Tripolezza. When again presented to him, "You would have acted more wisely," said he, "to have embraced the true faith for the sake of a patron than for the love of a mistress; and perhaps you might have found the service of the sultan more profitable than that of the beys. You have lost much time and gained few friends. But you are young still, and, what is more, you are brave: if you would not let me lay the foundation of your fortune, I still may raise the fabric to a desirable height." And so saying, he recommended me to his kehaya; who grinned a ghastly smile of obedience and of spite.

The government of Egypt being completely organized by the installation of Abdi-pasha in the office of vizier,

and all the forces having arrived that could be looked for, Hassan at last began to busy himself about the long-talked-of expedition to Upper Egypt, in pursuit of the rebels. Resolved not to stir himself from his commodious quarters in the capital, he gave the supreme command to his kehaya. The troops destined for the expedition were to rendezvous at Atter-el-nebbi, a place on the Nile, a little above Cairo. As before, the land force was to follow the banks of the river, and to be supported by the flotilla. Tchelebee-Zadé commanded the boats, while Hammandjee-Ogloo had under his orders the marines. Hassan's favour enabled me to exchange my ragged Koords for a fine body of Arnauts; and in honour of my new soldiers I furbished up my old Epirote pedigree, and my presumptive descent from Achilles and from *Iskander*. The former, indeed, they knew little about, but the name of the latter all to a man remembered, and only maintained, in opposition to my doctrine, that he had fought the doge of Venice, which, in fact, he had. Including the militia of the country, supplied by the citadel of Cairo, our force might amount to six thousand men; and I could not help thinking Hassan rather overrated our chance of success, when at parting he recommended to us, in a flowery speech, to bring back the days when the schaich-el-belled held the stirrup to the aga of the janissaries, and when the pasha of the Porte hung up the beys at pleasure under the gate of the castle; a wish at which Ismail, now surnamed Kbir, or the Great, Aly-bey Defterdar, Mohammed-bey Mabdool, Rodoan-bey the Bold, and several other beys present, I thought, winced a little.

As usual, our army depended for its subsistence on the plunder of the provinces through which we had to pass. This circumstance alone would have retarded our coming up with Mourad; but what still more increased the difficulty of closing with this chief was his own good management. He had profited by his discomfiture in the Delta. Instead of advancing to give us battle, he on the contrary kept constantly retreating before us; now and then just letting his rear appear in sight, to keep up the ardour of the pursuit. All at once we discovered his drift, when at Sioot we found the waters too low to permit the further progress of our flotilla, and thus were obliged to proceed onwards deprived of the support of our floating battery. With a diminished strength, we only reached the rebels at Djirdgé, where they had all the advantage of the

ground. Their position was admirable. Backed by the walls and garrison of the city, they had in front a long declivity of hard even ground, where their excellent horses and impenetrable coats-of-mail were as much in their favour as they had been against them in the swamps of the Delta. They rushed upon us like a cataract, and it soon became evident on which side the scale would turn. Our rout began among the Asiatics. The brave Arnaoots alone kept awhile the victory in suspense. Still anxious for the credit of my former corps, I set some Epirotes at the heels of the dellis, and kept them wedged in between two fires. This concern for other people's honour cost me dear. A pistol-shot struck my hip, which certainly came not from the enemy. It brought me not the less to the ground; and I must have died from loss of blood, or have been trampled under foot, had not one of my trusty Albanians thought me dead already. He judged it a pity that my handsome armour should become the spoil of rebels, and approached to strip me; when to his great dismay he found me still alive. For a second or two he seemed to consider whether he should not realize his surmise, but my good stars prevailed. Shrugging up his shoulders, as if to say it was not his fault, he took me in his arms, carried me off the field, bound up my wounds, and left me in the care of two of his comrades, themselves disabled from continuing to support a more active part in the engagement.

Meantime, our commander, seeing the rout become general, sounded the retreat. Fortunately, the enemy had determined to act only on the defensive, in order not to cut off all opening to a reconciliation. Mourad, content with the advantage gained, abstained from pursuing us. Thanks to his moderation, we experienced in our flight no other molestation than that of the Arabs and fellahs whose crops we had destroyed in our progress. At Sioot we rejoined our flotilla, and thence returned to Cairo in a plight which even the mamlukes reinstated by Hassan could view without breaking their hearts. The assistance of a rival is seldom forgiven.

After a certain period Mourad's Arab allies, tired of the protracted war, as usual, withdrew from the contest; and Mourad, deprived of half his strength, no longer appeared averse to a negotiation. Of this disposition Hassan availed himself to draw him down to Djizeh, when again he sent his kehaya in pursuit of the bey. Cured of my wound, I

joined the expedition, and on the 8th of January, 1787, we crossed the Nile. The flotilla on this occasion was out of the question; the river being at its lowest, and the commander of the Caleondjees dismissed; for Hassan suffered not his officers to rob without his participation.

At the news of our approach, Mourad again fell back; but we came up with him at Sioot, where he was forced to halt, to face about, and to receive us. His position was exactly the reverse of that at Djirgé. Instead of occupying the top of a long declivity, of which we filled the bottom, his army was drawn out at the bottom of an extended slope, of which we occupied the summit; and instead of having immediately in his rear a high wall to cover his movements, he only had a deep ditch to cut off his retreat. The consequence was, that when we fell upon him as he had done before upon us, with all the impetus of a down-hill charge, we almost immediately drove his troops backward into the fosse, where, tumbling head over heels in the mud, they left us no trouble but that of despatching them at leisure.

Of my old patron, who sided with the rebels, I hitherto have made no mention. The edge of the ravine, down whose slope the mamlukes were rolling, gave me the first glimpse of his venerable figure. He was curvetting midway the long declivity, surrounded by his retinue. The sight roused all my dormant feelings of relationship, and others not less warm; and I became most irresistibly anxious to join my father-in-law, to embrace, nay, to keep him entirely with me. Calling to my best men, I showed them the bey, and proposed a bold push for so valuable a prize. They fired at the thoughts, and off we set. I was within ten yards of his person, and already in imagination hugging him most tenderly, when some of his guards, perceiving our drift, gave the alarm. Immediately his whole house closed in upon him, and our purpose miscarried. I retired not, however, empty-handed. We had penetrated so far into the mamluke knot, that I was enabled to seize by the arm and to carry off what at the time was nearest Suleiman's heart, his tootoondjee.* This young fellow I consigned to some of my servants in the rear, and, having seen him safe in their custody, again returned to business.

The chase of a young mamluke, whose showy accou-

* Tootoondjee—officer who carries the tobacco-pouch of a great man.

trements caught my eye, had inadvertently drawn me out to some distance from my men, when another mamluke of more advanced age and greater powers, till then concealed behind a small eminence, suddenly darted forward between us. The contest now lay with the new comer, and his agility already rendered the issue more doubtful. But when a third mamluke of colossal size—a kiachef of my ancient patron's—found means by a dexterous circuit to join his comrade, my situation seemed desperate. It was plain that a scheme had been concerted to entrap me; and unable single-handed to contend with two such formidable antagonists whom others still were approaching, I gave myself up for lost, and only resolved to sell my life as dear as possible.

To my inexpressible surprise, just as I rushed forward, as I thought, to certain death, the new comer made signals for a truce, which his comrade immediately obeying, I did the same. I stopped short, still however remaining on my guard, and watching every motion of my enemies, in order to make my escape should an opportunity offer. The kiachef perceived my apprehensions. "Fear not," he cried; "your life is indeed in our hands: but we seek not your death; we want your prisoner. Restore Suleiman's tootoondjee, and in return take this handjar studded with diamonds, this order on the bey's harem at Cairo for two thousand sequins, and this signet of our patron's to corroborate his draft."

All this was vastly better than to be butchered. I accepted the offer. Some of my Arnoots, who had perceived my danger, were coming up. I cried to them, as soon as within hearing, to bring back the prisoner. One went on the errand, and the others waited at my signal. The tootoondjee was delivered over, and the ransom placed in my hands. With this rich spoil, the thing I feared most was to return to my own men. Fortunately, they were full-handed themselves, and I rejoined our troops safe and sound just in time to see the remnant of the enemy's force which had escaped the ditch in full flight towards the Saïd.

Our troops were so exhausted, that we spent the night where we had won the day. The next morning, ere we marched, I walked over the field of battle. Beholding on all sides sturdy limbs locked in death, which but the day before had turned my blows with all the energies of life; lips closed in eternal silence, which had stunned me with

their clamour, and eyeballs fixed in sightless glare, which when met by mine, had sent forth flashes of lightning; unable to avoid treading upon the mangled bodies of some who often had attempted to crush me with their very look, and now could not keep away the already busy vultures,—I felt a strange delight. I contemplated with a bitter satisfaction that unavoidable lot of all mankind, that doom of mortality which none can escape, that precariousness of life hanging alike over king and over beggar,—thanks to which, if I could not be sure of a single instant before me, no more was the proudest of my antagonists certain of not being the next moment a clod of clay, a mass of corruption, a feast for worms, a heap of dust; thanks to which, if any rival had over me a temporary advantage, it was, however great, a trifle, a nothing, in the contemplation of the common fate awaiting all with equal certainty, and to all coming too soon; and thanks to which, finally, if I could not reach the very top of fortune's wheel, or for the present carry my head quite as high as some of my more successful opponents, I knew that theirs must ultimately lie as low as mine.

"Poor, speechless, unresisting object!" cried I, lifting up by the ears one whose taunting language of the day before still rung gratingly in mine, "thou art now, not only below me, or the meanest of my slaves; thou art worse than the live dog that licked thy hand, or the very worm that crawls to thy corpse as to his meal; he harbours joy, thou feelest not even my abuse and my scorn!"

Though we did not absolutely stay in the agreeable spot which occasioned these reflections, we seemed loath for a time to move beyond its influence. Want of money to pay his troops prevented our commander from proceeding in good earnest in pursuit of the rebels, until the month of May. We then made a sudden move; but as we came in sight of Mourad's men, they crossed the river and retreated into Nubia. Arrived at the Cataracts, heat, want, and disease stopped our further progress. We admired the falls, turned about, and marched back to 'airo.

CHAPTER II.

By this time Hassan had, through penalties, confiscations, and other such processes, reaped all the real fruits he expected from his expedition. He knew the utter impossibility of exterminating a set of men who always kept open a retreat where they were secure of not being pursued; and he now made the approaching rupture between the Porte and Russia a pretence of conveying his armament back to Constantinople. On the 24th of July, 1787, therefore, he signed a treaty with the rebel beys, by which he left them in full possession of the country from Barbieh to the frontiers of Nubia. All below these limits was to be prohibited ground. For the observance of this treaty they consented to give as hostages four of their party; my old friend Ayoob-bey, Osman-bey Tamboordgi, and two other beys of recent creation, Abderahman and Hussein. They had leave, however, to remain at Cairo, under the eyes of the vizier.

The quartetto soon arrived, and I failed not to call upon Ayoob. He had strongly reprobated at the time Suleiman's conduct in giving me up, and assured me he wondered not to see a man of my mettle, after such treatment, return to Egypt in so different a character. I was glad in my turn to find an opportunity of doing a chief, who formerly had distinguished me in a most flattering manner, a very signal piece of service. Some expressions dropped by the capitan-pasha had made me surmise that some foul play was intended to the hostage beys. I need not say by what means I verified my suspicion; but I forthwith went and apprized Ayoob of his danger. His gratitude for this act led him to offer me a handsome present, which I declined.

Meanwhile Hassan had got every thing in readiness for his departure. He confirmed Abdi-pasha in his place of vizier, and Ismail-bey in his rank as schaich-el-belled. On his kehaya, whose name likewise was Ismail, he conferred the situation of his wekil, or agent at Cairo. After these and other appointments, he assembled in the citadel a solemn divan, gave in a set speech a pompous detail of the incalculable benefits he had bestowed on Egypt, and

terminated the sitting by inviting the four hostage beys, against the faith of treaties, to follow him to Constantinople. Osman, Abderahman, and Hussein, taken by surprise, were obliged to accept his proffered hospitality. Ayooob, more on his guard, had taken his precautions, and had given instructions to his mamlukes. The summons had scarce dropped from Hassan's lips, ere he rushed out, and, assisted by his suite, sought refuge in Ibrahim's harem. Hassan durst not, in defiance of his own solemn promise, drag him from so respected a sanctuary. He was left at Cairo in possession of all his honours.

Those which Hassan offered to my choice were, to remain in the citadel of Cairo, commander of the corps of Arnoots, or to go back to Constantinople, and obtain promotion in the expected war. Admiring neither the vizier, the schaich-el-belled, nor the wekil, and wishing much to try Valachia, and to rejoin Mavroyeni, I accepted the latter. The ransom of Suleiman's tootoondjee duly paid on presenting his order, the well-lined belt of a mamluke whom I had disrobed at Sioot, and the liquidation of certain old claims at Cairo, which I employed those ready accountants my Arnoots to settle, had gone a good way towards repairing my shattered finances. The last evening of my stay at Cairo added another figure to the balance of my capital. As I passed through a narrow lane, an ill-looking fellow suddenly stopped me, and drew out a dagger. I started back: but instead of the point he turned to me the hilt, left the handjar in my hands, and disappeared. The weapon was covered with emeralds, and of considerable value. I had seen it before, on grand occasions, sparkle in Ayooob's girdle. I never displayed it in mine.

Nothing remarkable occurred on the journey down the Nile. On the 21st of October we weighed anchor from Alexandria. Our voyage was prosperous—our reception at Constantinople indifferent. The mob of the capital, it seems, had promised itself the agreeable spectacle of the heads of the Egyptian beys stuck on the battlements of the Bab-humayoom, and cared little to see us only bring back our own. To ourselves, however, this was a source of some satisfaction; and the more, as we brought, besides, wherewithal to fortify our minds against idle clamour.

Even after Spiridion and I had parted for ever, my friend had not dismissed all solicitude in my behalf.

Fearing lest the obscurity which hung over Achmet's death might not always succeed in preventing its influence over my fate, should I return to Stamboul, he had, during my campaign in Egypt, negotiated with the family of the deceased a legal renunciation of its vindictive rights. At first, indeed, his proposal greatly shocked the mourning parents. "What! sell the life of a relation, of a son, for money!—No, never! Were the earth to swallow them up on the spot, they must, they would have blood for blood!—At any rate, they could only compound with the executioner's axe on the culprit's neck!" By degrees, however, they came round to more reasonable sentiments. The event was nearly forgotten, the loss small, the chance of discovering the offender still less, and the sum offered considerable. With many ifs and buts, they at last signed so formal an act of forgiveness, that I might, if I liked, have added to my other titles that of slayer of Kara Achmet. I needed not this new proof of kindness, to feel ill at ease until I had embraced my friend. Fearful, however, of taking him by surprise, perhaps at an unseasonable moment, I sent to inquire whether my visit would be acceptable. I acted wisely. Just then was pending the negotiation with the lady who soon after bestowed upon him her fair hand. Her parents only objected his former intimacy with a notorious profligate and a renegado. Had I shown myself at that juncture, and taken advantage of Spiridion's friendship to appear in his company, the match would have been broken off. It was even requisite, I understood, for the advancement of the business, that the coolness arisen between us should be openly expressed. I complained aloud and in bitter terms of Spiridion's leaving me at Chio; but privately I sent him, as a token of friendship, a fine Arabian, accompanied by a few lines of affection and of thanks. Unavowed proceedings always turn out ill, however well meant! whether the messenger thought the horse would betray the giver, or whether the horse ran away with the messenger, neither they nor the letter reached their destination; and long after, I heard that Spiridion had felt hurt at my seeming neglect.

Returning one day from witnessing with infinite satisfaction to what degree the Franks, who accuse the Greeks of meanness, can humble themselves even in the person of the representatives of their sovereigns, before the paltriest of the sultan's officers; and how at their

public audiences these pliant envoys of European powers will put up with any indignity from the lowest Turkish rabble, for the sake of maintaining a constant intercourse with a nation which returns their advances with contempt, I happened to meet a face no longer young, which put me in mind of an old vow, not the less sacred from the lowly station of its object. It was that made to the little grocer's wife, who in the days of my first distress had come to my relief with conserve of roses. In her own later career—poor soul—bitters had succeeded sweets. The new French style of cookery, and the white sauces introduced with the revolutionary principles among the Greeks of fashion, had exploded the spice and comfits, staple ingredients of the darker complexioned dishes, the delight of their forefathers. The grocer, consequently, was become a bankrupt, had died of grief in the midst of his unsold dainties, and had left his consort to struggle with misfortunes, which required a species of consolation more solid and less sentimental than that which I once administered to a mourning widow in Egypt. I should not have mentioned the visit which I paid for this purpose, and the real pleasure I derived from the relief I was able to afford, but that my friends, justly solicitous about my unsullied fame, might remark that I had at an early period of my history recorded a solemn engagement, and nowhere had mentioned its fulfilment.

Let us return to matters of more importance. Though from the first instant of his elevation, Youssoof-vizier had been preparing the rupture with Russia, the war broke out without any formal declaration. On the 18th of August, 1787, the Russian ambassador found himself unexpectedly complimented with a lodging at the sultan's expense in the Seven Towers,* and the Turkish troops stationed at Ockzakow made an attack upon the fortress of Kinburn, when the garrison thought itself in profound peace. The fullest success of these petty manœuvres could not have made amends for the imputation of bad faith which they fixed upon the Turks; their failure only added disgrace to discomfiture. They gave the Emperor of Austria a plausible excuse for joining the Russians, and for declaring war against the Porte on the 9th February, 1788. This event seemed to mark

* The Seven Towers—state prison of Constantinople, in which the Porte shuts up the ministers of hostile powers, under pretence of protecting them from the insults of the mob.

Valachia for the seat of the ensuing campaign. It increased my wish to take a share in its hazards; and I obtained from Hassan-pasha letters both for Youssoof and for Mavroyeni. Encamped at Daood-pasha, the supreme vizier had already hoisted the sacred standard of the Prophet, and was collecting round it the grand army of the faithful, for the defence of the empire at large. I intended to visit the commander-in-chief on my way, but aware of my moderate dimensions, and expecting to make a greater figure on the smaller theatre of Valachia, I purposed to tarry only with Mavroyeni.

Neither personage, however, was to be favoured with my company the very first instant on which that happiness could possibly befall them: such unnecessary diligence would have bespoken too great anxiety in their behalf. With my letters in my pocket, I gave three days more to the dissipation of the capital; and satisfied with having, through dint of unexampled diligence, compassed as much pleasure as so short a period would allow, proceeded without further delay on the less perilous road to open warfare and destruction. My equipage was light. It consisted of what my horse could carry in addition to my person; for, unable to afford a long string of attendants, I thought my safety better ensured by a perfectly unobtrusive appearance, than by a small and insufficient retinue.

Though I had seen camps before, that of the vizier Azem, with all its want of order, struck me as very magnificent. The central object, the tent of the commander, looked a most imposing mass: but its tenant disappointed me. I had formerly known Youssoof as Hassan's kehaya. He was then quoted for the erect majesty of his mien, and for the jetty lustre of his ample beard. The personage to whom I was introduced at Daood-pasha, on the contrary, had the gray hairs of age and the stoop of infirmity. "Heavens!" thought I, "can this be the same man whom I formerly admired? can seven years so pull down the sturdiest human frame? would they make of me so woful a ruin?" And it was a relief to my mind when I heard that Youssoof, in order to increase the gravity of his appearance, used similar arts for the purpose of looking old and infirm to those which others employ for that of appearing young and active.

With the other attributes of age, Youssoof seemed to

have acquired its garrulity. I thought there never would have been an end to his inquiries after Hassan-pasha. The grand admiral's health, his looks, his spirits, were each separately made the theme of long and repeated expressions of solicitude; and at each favourable reply Youssoof blessed Allah for the good news with such studied emphasis, that I judged the vizier's affection for his ancient patron and the capitan-pasha's regard for his overgrown favourite to have sunk nearly to the same temperature. Base coin is always showy.

As soon as Youssoof had added his contribution to my letters for Mavroyeni, I proceeded on my journey. The supreme vizier himself was soon to break up his first station, and to halt successively at divers other marked places, in order to give the Zaïms and Timariotes of all the different provinces of Roumili an opportunity of reinforcing his army; and I was unwilling, by unnecessary delay, to encounter on the road more than I could help of the small detachments of true believers, expected soon to obey from all quarters the invitation of Mohammed's vicar to join his lieutenant's forces.

From Daood-pasha I met nothing in a questionable shape until I reached Erekli, where appearances became more terrific. On going out at the gate of that city after dusk, and turning the corner of the spacious burying-ground which extends close under its walls, my horse suddenly stopped, and, in defiance of all my efforts to urge him on, stood wildly looking towards the tombs, and trembling like a leaf. "So!" thought I, at these symptoms of terror, "the ghouls are abroad; the spirits of the dead hold their revels; the living are unwelcome here!" And in fact I soon perceived, by the light of the moon, a number of deep and threatening shadows in human form glide along the marble gravestones. The spectres seemed to move hand in hand round the funereal mounds, sometimes separating, then again forming clusters, then totally disappearing under ground. Presently sounds too arose from the hollow earth; a confused murmur pervaded the cemetery; and at last a whole swarm of ghastly figures sprang up close to my horse—no longer, indeed, unsubstantial phantoms, but seeming from their emaciated form and pallid hue the very corpses of the dead, which, with hideous yell, formed around me a frightful ring.

No sooner, however, had I had leisure to survey them

more minutely, than my apprehensions of the deceased vanished in my fears of the living; and I no longer thought myself in the company of spectres, but in that of banditti. Accordingly, clapping both stirrups to my horse, I was going to break through or to ride over this pedestrian circle, as might be most feasible, when I perceived that none of the party were armed, or at least had any weapon more formidable than a stick, or a pair of crutches; that there were as many women and children in the ranks as men; and that more than two-thirds of the troop were halt, blind, or paralytic.

There is, gentle reader, a district in the Morea whose inhabitants are to a man beggars by profession. Every year, as soon as they have sown their fields, these industrious members of society abandon their villages until harvest-time, and sally forth on a begging circuit through the different provinces of Roumili. The elders and chiefs of the community plan the route, divide the provinces, and allot to each detachment its ground. They shorten or prolong their sojourn in the different places they visit, according as the mine of charity is rich and has been more or less explored. Through wastes where little is to be gleaned, large troops travel in close order; but on approaching fruitful districts, the swarms again divide and spread. According to his peculiar talent, each individual undertakes the heartrending tale of mental woe, or the disgusting display of bodily suffering. "His wife and children died of hunger by the roadside after being burnt out of house and home;" or, "he has an incurable leprosy in every joint;" or "he is actually giving up the ghost for want of a morsel of food!" Old traders grown rich by their indigence sell out to young beginners, and the children of the society remain in common; so that each female may in turns be provided with a pair of fatherless twins, to be duly pinched to tears and made lustily to roar out whenever compassionate people are in sight. Unceasing warfare is kept up with interlopers from other quarters who trespass on the domain of this regularly organized band. Among its members a dislocated limb or a disgusting disease is esteemed a peculiar blessing; an hereditary complaint is a sort of an estate, and if conspicuous, and such as to resist the officious remedies of the charitable, confers rank, and may be called a badge of nobility. But even those who have the misfortune to labour under the most incurable state of

health and vigour, are dexterous, if not radically to correct this perverseness of nature, at least to remove its untoward external appearance. They excel in the manufacture of counterfeit wounds and mock disease; and the convulsions of a demoniac are graceful movements to their spontaneous fits.

The troop with which I had the luck to fall in had destined Erekli for the next day's scene of action. Its worthy members were taking among the tombs a comfortable night's rest previous to the morning's labours. Already had most of the party sunk into soft slumbers on the pillows of the fresh-laid graves, when the tramp of my horse, resounding among the hollow vaults and reverberated by the sculptured slabs, roused and made them start up and surround me as has been seen. Their clamour was only the eleemosynary ditty which from long habit they kept mumbling even in their sleep.

Moved with compassion at the sight of so much suffering, I determined at once to remove all these accumulated ills, and for this purpose began to lay lustily about me with my good long ox-hide whip. It would have gladdened a feeling heart to see what a salutary and immediate effect this application had. At the very first flourish the lame found the use of their legs, the blind recovered their sight, and the deaf and dumb a stentorian voice. A poor decrepit creature doubled with age and infirmity, straightening as if by magic, became all at once as nimble as a stag; and a man shaped like a dromedary slipped his hunch without missing it.

The fright of my friends, however, was not of long duration. By degrees they began to fancy that though I was armed and on horseback and they were unarmed and on foot, yet in the dark, and among heaps of grave-stones, thirty or forty had a chance against one. In this notion they again rallied, and soon sticks and stones whizzed about my ears as thick as hail. I now found I had to deal with a set of ungrateful rogues, who, so far from thanking me for the miraculous cure I had performed, only requited good with evil. I therefore left them to their fate, scampered off, and soon got out of sight, and a very little while after out of hearing of the volleys of abuse which accompanied the showers of stones.

The crossing of the Balkan, I suppose, would have been a delightful treat to one who preferred the remains of a former worn-out world to the good things of the

present one, and a petrified oyster or cabbage to fare of easier digestion. For my part, I who felt more anxious to know the end of things than their origin, was very glad when I found Mount Hemus fairly left behind me, and still more so when before me I beheld winding in ample sweeps the wide waters of the Danube. My raptures still increased on setting foot, after crossing the turbid stream, on the plains of Valachia.

In order to profit as much as possible by the benefits of Christendom, and to evince the estimation in which I still held its institutions, I purposed sleeping the first night of my entrance within its pale, at a monastery. I had heard of one on the road, where the caloyers lived well, and could spare a wayfaring man a few crumbs from their table, and a corner in their dormitory. On my arrival I found my design forestalled. The convent had been invaded, only an hour before, by a set of Frank travellers, who carried peremptory orders from the provincial government for their reception at every place on the road.

I say invaded: for between masters, servants, interpreters, couriers, mikmanders,* and janissaries, there were no less I think than twenty or thirty individuals; and for many of the least important among them singly, the place appeared much too small. The very monks had been turned out of their cells to make room for the strangers.

At first I took for granted that so mighty a removal of human bodies from the place of their birth must have an adequate end; and that the head of the party could be no less than the ambassador of some great Christian potentate, come to transact affairs of the utmost importance with the Porte; and resigned myself in consequence to lay my own diminished head where I could: but on discreetly seeking to have my surmises confirmed by a sort of courier, half Swiss half Italian, who, in a gibberish between both, was giving directions to the Greek steward of the convent who understood neither, I could only discover that the padrone was a young gentleman of great fortune, who, tired of having every thing at home in the most comfortable style, for nothing but the trouble of issuing his commands, was thus wandering about the world for no other purpose but to enjoy the variety of

* Mikmanders—officer who in Turkey accompanies ambassadors and other distinguished travellers as purveyor.

now and then going to bed without his supper, or getting up without having gone to bed. Constantinople was to be his first halting-place on the journey; but whether from thence he was to go by land to China, or by sea to Peru, was not yet decided.

I now began to think it somewhat hard that in the sultan's own dominions, one of his faithful subjects, travelling on real business, and who had lived long enough not to think of going to bed on an empty stomach, or sleeping in the fields, a desirable variety, should be thus kept on the *pavè* by strangers who only came to burthen us with their ennui; and accordingly desired my informer to go and remonstrate in my name with his master respecting the unreasonable monopoly he was exercising; fully determined should the negotiation prove inefficient, to resort to more energetic measures for obtaining redress. I knew that, to whatever extremities I might proceed, the Greeks would remain neutral, and I feared not the Franks. All I apprehended was, that the servant might not deliver my message in terms sufficiently forcible; and I therefore soon followed myself—highly incensed at the supposed indignity I was suffering—and bolted into his excellency's dingy chamber, just as the courier had concluded his speech.

To find all complacency where one expects nothing but resistance, and is prepared only for measures of compulsion, occasions a shock similar to that of sinking into a down pillow where one had laid one's account with finding a seat of impenetrable stone; and this sort of shock I mentally experienced, when I found a young man of the most prepossessing appearance, only intent upon knowing in what way he could most effectually accommodate myself and all my suite; and ending by inviting me to partake of his own indifferent supper, which, he added, his companion had just stepped down to hasten.

Thus courteously addressed, my answer was made to correspond, and nothing ensued but a conflict of civilities, at the conclusion of which I only just went out again to look after my suite, viz. my horse,—ere I gave myself up for the remainder of the evening to the pleasure of conversing with so well-bred a host.

His invitation to the strange traveller at the gate had meanwhile gone abroad among his own retinue; and before I was able to return from my excursion, I had the satisfaction of overhearing the impression it produced on

his companion, who was still bustling below-stairs. This somewhat less hospitable personage was pleased loudly to wonder what pleasure Mr. T. could find in courting every adventurer, Turk or Christian, with whom he fell in on the road; and grievously moaned over the selfish vanity which made a man of his sense unfeelingly put his friends out of their way, merely to have his politeness admired by every stranger.

The remark fortunately had no effect upon my appetite; it only made me take a particular pleasure in interrupting its author's more agreeable occupation of devouring the supper he had helped to cook, by a thousand little attentions, for which in his heart he would have boxed my ears. The meal, however, was not long. I soon perceived that my host, though striving to the utmost to entertain his guest, was quite overcome with the fatigue of the journey, and therefore speedily proposed a separation—in which I was most warmly seconded by his companion, who, having eaten enough, and even more perhaps, now sagaciously observed that, as they were to rise betimes, they had better go to their rest.

As far as his own share was concerned, it is but doing the gentleman in question justice to state that he spared nothing to promote this laudable object. He kept to himself a mattress, which might have accommodated three more of his fellow-travellers, who were unceremoniously left to lie on the bare tiles: but in spite of this precaution, the nimble tenants of the place, whose supper was only just beginning, kept him awake. This misfortune caused him to groan so loudly and so incessantly all night, that no one within hearing could get a wink of sleep. I heartily regretted his fine feelings, and wished he had had some of the selfishness of his patron.

The moment the Frank party was off, the caloyers were released from the confinement in which they had been kept during their stay—the superior alone having manfully stood his ground all the time. I thought he looked at me with a suspicious eye, for having under my Turkish garb associated so freely with Franks, and feared he might make some report at Bucharest to my disadvantage. The impression was to be done away; and taking him therefore aside, I honestly confessed that I was not only a Greek—which my speech confirmed—but a disguised emissary from Russia, come to sound the

disposition of the Greek papases in favour of Ekatharina!* Hereupon his heart opened: he expressed his admiration of the empress, in particular for her laudable perseverance in the privations of widowhood; and earnestly entreated me to inform her by the first opportunity what a stanch friend she had in Father Kyrillos; dwelling much all the while on the means of corresponding with the well affected to that sovereign which his convent afforded,—a hint by no means lost upon me, when afterward I had troops to quarter and contributions to levy.

Continuing my journey, absorbed in reflections which were greatly favoured by my slow progress through endless bogs, I scarce perceived a personage who came from whither I was going, until he pulled up his steed to consider me more at leisure. I returned him the compliment, though his equipage little deserved it, and “Selim!” on his part, and “Condilly!” on mine, were roared out at the same instant.

This Signor Condilly, originally a Roman Catholic, had first married a sister of Mavroyeni’s, and consequently a Greek. On her demise he showed his grief by embracing the Greek creed himself, and marrying a Roman Catholic. Her he left to go into a monastery; and the convent he fled from to take a third wife, younger than the two former. He had treated his sovereigns as he had done his consorts. When Venetian consul at the Canéa, he sold the interests of the republic to the Turks; and when employed for the Turks at Zante, he betrayed them to the Venetians. I had known him at Constantinople, where he gave himself as much airs as if he carried Jove’s thunder in his sleeve, and entertained his friends with stories so long and tiresome, that they would have made the very moon split her face with yawning. On Mavroyeni’s appointment to the principality of Valachia, he sent his worthy brother-in-law on before him to Bucharest as his caïmakam; and when he came himself, he appointed Condilly his cupbearer: nor had I heard, when we met, of any later change.

“Whither bound, Georgacki,” cried I, “for the capital, or for the army?”

“For whatever place,” was his reply, “I may be invited to. You see me at large again!”

* Ekatharina, pronounced Yekatharina—equivalent among the Russians to Evkatharina; the great or good Katharina.

"That misfortune," rejoined I, "you seem used to; but how happened this last dismissal?"

"Who can tell?" exclaimed Condilly, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Not I at least!—When a man has his familiar spirit, with whom alone he takes counsel, we poor mortals are not admitted behind the scenes. Those who act by inspiration may do any thing! You have heard of the wealthy Vakareskolo, the Cræsus of boyars,* who thought himself so secure from being fleeced, by never appearing at court, and declining all dangerous distinctions. Well!—has not Mavroyeni, by means of his invisible counsellor, at last hunted him out, and sent to him to say that the humble should be exalted, and that his very disinterestedness made it necessary, for the good of the country, that he should assume some high and responsible office!"

"The bey found not the same reason, I presume," answered I, "for continuing your services?"

"His household demon," rejoined Condilly, "lately put it into his head that his Greek name was a base corruption; that he was descended from the ancient Venetian family of Morosini: and Maurocenus is now the name he insists on being addressed by. My tongue once made an unlucky slip; I called him by that of his forefathers;—and for this offence he condemned me, his kinsman, his counsellor, and his cupbearer, who tasted every drop of his wine, to bread and water in the salt mines! Had I remained there long I must have become pickled alive, and so have died a vampire, even without excommunication, and have sucked his blood, as he does that of others. For that reason only, I suppose, he let me out at last, on condition of leaving Valachia. But, oh! how I shall talk as soon as I am past the frontier!"

To me it seemed that Signor Condilly waited not till that period to execute his threat. Loath, however, to lose time in conversation where I was sure not to hear a word of truth,—*"Hark ye, Georgacki,"* cried I, "you, who are going, may be right to talk, but I, who am coming, would do wrong to listen. You have been long enough in the world to know that the atmosphere of one out of favour is infectious, and cannot take it amiss if you are done by as you would do by others. So adieu! and fare ye well!"

* Boyars—the indigenous nobles of Valachia and Moldavia.

At these words I pushed on. The cupbearer called after me, to say that, for all my caution, he would bespeak the horses for my own return. I did not stop to retort, but made what speed I could, and the same evening reached Bucharest.

CHAPTER III.

FROM the first moment of the rupture with Austria, Mavroyeni, expecting Valachia to become the theatre of the war, had sent his princess and all her useless train back to Constantinople; a wise measure, I thought, where *real* clouds were gathering! In order to defray the expenses requisite for the defence of the principality, he had levied enormous contributions, not only on the laity, but on the clergy, who, as ministers of peace, could not conceive what they had to do with the war, and thought their task fulfilled when they had prayed for the safety of the country. He had moreover banished to Turkey, or put in durance on the spot, such of the boyars and others—no matter what their rank—whom he suspected of a secret understanding with Austria. Among the passes or ravines which form the only communication athwart the formidable barrier of mountains that separate Transylvania from the land of the Roumooms,* he had distributed seven or eight thousand seïmen, or provincial troops. Through his care, Bucharest, a city of immense extent, lying in an almost dead flat, for whose defence nature had done nothing, and art could do but little, became as strongly fortified as its situation permitted. Each khan within its circuit was converted into a battery, and each convent into a fortress. The very archiepiscopal palace, and the cathedral, situated on the only eminence favourable for defence, were, to the inexpressible horror of the Valachians, transformed into a citadel. Soldiers were quartered where priests used to say mass, cannon-balls heaped up where stood the cross, and muskets and sabres piled where had been raised the host!

* Roumooms—name which the Valachians give themselves.

It was in the midst of all this bustle of warlike preparations that I entered Bucharest. At its gates nothing was seen but groups of moaning families going out, and detachments of turbulent soldiers marching in; and wherever I stopped within its precincts, no other discourse met my ear but that of banishments, confiscations, fines, imprisonments, recruitings, fortifications, and plans of attack and of defence. "Good!" said I to myself; "this martial discord is music to my ears! It promises plenty of what I most want: dear delightful confusion! Born to live in troubled waters, again I breathe, again I feel in my element! And every officer of state whose favour seemed expiring, every grandee of the court whose fall was announced, I only considered as kindly making room for me. I resembled those sagacious birds of prey who, the moment the battle begins to rage, flap their wings, exult, and already in imagination revel in their promised feast!

When, however, the first tumult of the sense allayed, I sat down quietly in my lodging, to consider how I should best proceed, my reflections assumed a soberer hue, and my expectations gradually fell to a less exalted pitch. "I am now," thought I, "in a place where I possess not a friend, nor even an acquaintance; where all must consider me as an intruder against whom it is their business to unite; and, in that place, at the mercy of a single man—and that Mavroyeni!—Mavroyeni! even in his first dependent state often uncontrollable, and ruled by caprice rather than by cool reason, and who now, after so long thirsting in a state of servility for the despotic sway he has at last obtained, every hour drinks unto intoxication of the sweet cup of power! It is true, I bear within my own breast the qualities which his situation renders most valuable, and I carry in my pocket the recommendations which his interest obliges him most to respect. The commands in my favour of the two rulers of the state—by sea and by land—would, with any other person in his place, leave me no further trouble than that of announcing myself and my wishes!—And I moreover know Mavroyeni sufficiently lenient in religious matters, not to regard my apostacy as a great bar to my promotion, even in his Greek principality: but," added I, in order to restrain the too sanguine hopes founded on these considerations, "may he not retain an unfavourable impression of my youthful pranks, and my insolent mode of

quitting his service? May he not, with still more probability, feel hurt at my long estrangement from his person, my long apparent disdain of his protection, my long obstinacy in seeking my fortune any where upon earth rather than under the shelter of his wing!"—So often had his wayward temper only turned the more restive for being more sharply reined, that, in order to show his independence, it was likely he might make the very weight of my recommendations, a motive for treating me with the greater coolness.—I therefore, spite of my expectations, prepared my mind for the possibility of an indifferent reception, and resolved only to advance in so cautious a manner, as not to stand much committed should I meet with a rebuff.

In this spirit—so far from dressing for my first audience of Mavroyeni as I had done for my first interview with Suleiman; from informing every passenger as I went along, by the importance of my looks, that I was going to court; from announcing in an authoritative tone, on my arrival at the palace, that I carried letters from the grand vizier, the lord high admiral, and the drogouman of the navy—I rather ran into the opposite extreme, and by way of pitching my tone at the outset in such a key as I might be sure not to have to lower afterward, came in so modest a dress, crept into the audience-chamber in so quiet a manner, and, having delivered my message in a scarce audible voice, stood so demurely with my hands in my sleeves, at the further end of the room, that I scarce was noticed by a troop of gentlemen of greater apparent pretensions, who held their more conspicuous station in the middle of the apartment, and bore such a prodigious air of self-importance, that their very yawnings (which were both frequent and loud) had in them a something grand and imposing; while their conversation—chiefly intended, it should seem, for the benefit of distant hearers—ran entirely upon the last joke of the Ban of Crayova, the last remark of the cameraz, and the last witticism of the spatâr!

I had heard that in some place or other the humble were to be exalted: but this certainly was not in Mavroyeni's anteroom. Its familiars seemed of a sort not easily to give a stranger credit for higher claims than he chose to divulge, but disposed, on the contrary, to indulge a man desirous of remaining in the background to the utmost of his wishes. It is true, they vouchsafed now

and then to honour me with their attention, so far as to eye me from head to foot—but it was with any thing but a look of invitation to join their group. This silent scrutiny was even carried to such a length, that at last my patience forsook me, and I began, in my turn, to stare at the starers with sufficient steadiness gradually to disconcert all their petulance, and to make them fall from their haughty self-sufficient look, into an appearance of downright constraint, until at last one of the set, determined to beat me out of the field, detached himself from the group, came over to where I stood with a sort of mock civility, and asked me, in a simpering tone, whether the company had the honour of my approbation ?

I was going to answer “No,” without circumlocution—when suddenly the door of the inner room opened, and the party fell back to range themselves round the room in a respectful circle, in the middle of which the gentleman usher advanced to select whom he should first introduce to his highness.

Each was striving to obtain that distinction, by straining to protrude the upper part of his body a few inches before that of his neighbour—for as to me, I did not at that critical moment come into consideration at all, and would have been entirely forgotten, had I not informed the usher of my presence, by holding over the heads of those that pressed before me certain talismanic papers, at the sight of which the officer pushed the crowd aside to let me pass. I now handed to him my credentials to be taken to the prince; and as I delivered my letters, amused myself with naming the writers one by one.

Being, on the strength of so respectable an introduction, immediately let in, I left my anteroom friends nearly as composed as if a thunderbolt had just exploded among them. One half looked pale as ashes, the other red as crimson; and every one seemed intent only upon how he should repair his imprudence most dexterously on the reappearance of the great man in disguise.

Though my call was speedy, my reception was not the more promising. Mavroyeni, at first, deigned not even to greet me with that look of surprise with which I had laid my account, but went on with the different occupations in which I found him engaged, as if unaware of my presence; leaving me full leisure mean time to mark the havoc made by ambition more than by age in his originally hard and homely features. In fact, the ruling pas-

sion seemed to have increased to such a degree the obliquity which the natural dimness of his right eye had produced in the motions of the other, as to have rendered his a perfectly *sinister* look, in every sense of the word. He always eyed one askance! Those to whom he stood opposite his eye glanced beside; and to fix his interlocutor, he turned his face away from him. It is true, that the lower features of that same face in some measure made amends for the defects of those above. His jet black beard and mustachios, of which he took great care, encompassed lips whose smile was as pleasing as the frown of his dark brow was terrific; and these lips in their turn disclosed, when he spoke, two rows of teeth as white as snow, which he never suffered long to remain unseen.

For some time after my entrance, however, he only showed them to me in the process of dictating a letter of three pages to the reïs effendee: and not until he had finished this and all his other business—paring his nails included—with the utmost composure, did he seem to perceive that I stood before him, tired of watching his left eye, and of commencing bows all stifled in the birth. At last, when he had fairly exhausted his own occupations and my patience, he cast a look my way, and appeared to see me; but it was only to ask in a gruff and snappish manner—while pointing to my poor letters flung unopened on the sofa, “Whether it was I who had brought that load of paper?”

I bowed again, and said it was, but only as intrusted with its conveyance. “For well I know,” added I, “that with your highness neither interest avails, nor even talent when presumptuously relying on its own merit, and without the sunshine of your spontaneous favour, heaven-directed towards its possessor!”

This compliment to the bey’s independence smoothed the bristles round his heart. His features immediately relaxed; and I thought I could clearly discern, athwart what they retained of outward rigidity, an inward smile of approbation. At last his satisfaction even broke out in words. “Right,” he cried, “my will alone is my law! If you were the angel Gabriel, descended from the highest heaven, you must hit my fancy ere you obtain my favour—at least here in Valachia. But,” added he, wholly unbending, “you know I always liked you in spite of your pranks; nay, perhaps even the better for them.

You were clever as a lad, and I trust years have given you discretion without blunting your spirit. Tell me, for I know you have been *kiachef* in Egypt, how you got that rank, and how you contrived to lose it?"

Thus invited, I gave the bey a sketch of my principal adventures—not indeed drawn with the entire unreserve of these memoirs, but in which, without startling Mavroyeni's belief by an improbable account of my excessive wisdom or virtue, I yet only touched upon my follies and vices with the tender hand of a friend, whose blame is less severe than the praise of an enemy. The last occurrence which I mentioned was the first of my entrance into the bey's dominions, the meeting with Condilly.

"He was going to Turkey," said I.—"Not so," answered Mavroyeni. "He was speeding to Vienna: he only made a circuit to deceive me. It was not worth the while. I ever knew him do more harm to his friends than to his enemies; and so I ordered that every pass might be opened to him. With you I mean to do the reverse."

I assured the bey I should remain a willing prisoner; and finding that nothing more was wanting of me for the present, made my bow and retired.

Meantime my seemingly interminable audience had fully confirmed the idea of my importance in the ante-room. The mystery which hung over my character only served, like the vapours which envelop a mountain, to magnify my seeming grandeur; and when I stole back among my friends in sheep-skin, I found that during my absence they had had high words about me; each reproaching the rest for his own incivility. No sooner did they perceive my return, than they all dropped some incidental remark, intended to smooth the way to a more direct address. The gentleman who had the first turned a deaf ear to my salutation had lost his hearing from a cold; the one who had laughed at me the most openly had been able to think of nothing but a domestic misfortune which quite distracted his senses; and as to the one who attacked me in articulate speech, he always made it a point, when he saw a stranger of quality anxious to remain incognito, of doing something or other to favour the scheme.

Having thus each dropped his little propitiatory sentence, but without the smallest intention—poor innocent souls!—of its being overheard, they now all with the

utmost surprise perceived me standing before them, immediately bowed in the most gracious manner, and all speaking together, ventured in the most obsequious terms to express—but what?—is the thing I am unable to tell, as, without stopping to hear it, I left the cringing circle to divide among them a single supercilious glance cast upon the whole troop collectively, and then turning on my heel, very quietly walked off.

The next day I received from Mavroyeni a summons to a pleasure-garden formed by him the year before, outside the city. “A good omen this,” thought I: “his villa is the place where he deposits his beyslip at the entrance gate;” and truly, among his tulips and ranunculuses, his temper seemed, chameleon-like, to reflect a somewhat gayer hue. It was almost *couleur de rose*, and not perhaps the less resembling the queen of flowers, because it had a lurking thorn. Through Mavroyeni’s transient gayety of manner and conversation might still be discerned the stationary weight which oppressed his heart, as through the fleeting waters of the stream you see the rocks that lie motionless below. The whole drift of the prince’s apparently unpremeditated discourse tended indirectly to find out how he was spoken of by the world at large. “Nothing,” he observed, “was so entertaining as to hear what people say of one; and nobody had such opportunities of knowing as a stranger who mixed in every set, and whom no party yet mistrusted. Often an indifferent new comer heard sentiments drop by chance from the lip, which the person most deeply interested could not wring from the heart.”

“Ah sir!” cried I—apt to doubt the delight which great men profess to find in hearing the abuse bestowed upon them—“what can your highness expect to learn, but that your subjects vie with each other in expressions of attachment and veneration?”

“Do they,” resumed Mavroyeni, coolly, “dwell most upon my clemency, or upon my disinterestedness?”

This was a home question. It was taking flattery by storm, and inviting its caresses, where, with the utmost good-will it could only inflict wounds. A man might swallow a good deal of vague and general panegyric, however inapplicable; but there appeared, in the present case, so strange a craving for the peculiar sort of praise most clashing with the constitution, that I thought it never could go down: I was sure it was not meant to

be digested. So entirely had the query the air of a trap laid to catch the flatterer, and to turn into ridicule the flattery, that I looked at Mavroyeni for the confirmation of this surmise. But his countenance gave no clew, his features were immoveable.

"Sir," said I, therefore, "every one knows the natural humanity of your disposition; every one is persuaded that if, in your conduct, you depart in the least from the dictates of clemency, your tender soul regrets what your trying situation commands."

"I see," rejoined Mavroyeni, with a gesture of impatience, "I can extract nothing from you. Now, at least, let me show I can spare your information. Let me tell you myself what people say. They call me—a monster of rapaciousness and cruelty."

I looked surprised.

"Yes," repeated the bey, raising his voice; "they call me as covetous as hell, and as merciless as Satan; and though you try to look astonished, you know it full as well as I do. But what you may not perhaps know quite so fully, is, that for being what I am, I deserve public thanks."

Here my surprise became real, and I therefore concealed it.

"Two things," rejoined Mavroyeni, "I assume, which you will scarcely deny."—

I was going to say, "Certainly not;" but I stopped myself.

"The first," he continued, "is that this province must be defended; and the second, that no man in the empire is fit to defend it but myself."

I bowed assent.

"Now!" added the prince; "how am I to fortify my province against invasion, without money; and how, without money, am I to keep myself in my province? Without the sums necessary to raise soldiers and batteries, the Austrians march into Bucharest next month; and without the sums requisite to see the capitan-pasha, the vizier, and the sultan, I am turned out of my principality next year. Let then my avarice light on the heads of my employers. With them, my generosity would be my only crime.—

"Again;—as to cruelty," resumed he, having paused to breathe. "For what purpose, do you think, has the Porte made in my favour the hitherto unexampled excep-

tion to its rules of joining the rank of a Turkish seraskier to the prerogatives of a Greek hospodar? * For what purpose has the Porte allowed me to command in the field several thousands of Moslemin soldiers! but for that of enabling me to avert the extraordinary perils that hang over this province, by extraordinary vigour! If I then find, that from all the various peculiarities in my situation, as a native of the Isles, as the subject of a Mohammedan master, and as myself a follower of the Christian religion, I have everybody against me, as well within the very heart of my principality as beyond its boundaries; if I see the Greek who hates me as an intruder, the Valachian who wishes for the Austrians, and the Mussulman who looks down upon me as a Yaoor and a Rayah, all unite in praying for my subversion; if I have to defend myself against the jealousy of the first, the treachery of the second, and the fanaticism of the last; if I know that the least lenity, considered as weakness, will only encourage their audacity, and hasten my ruin; and if I also know that with me must perish my province—is it not my duty to my sovereign and my province, by an extraordinary pressure, to cement the jarring elements ready to fall asunder; and must I not, neglecting the petty forms of the law to do the speedier justice, wherever I can, pinion the suspected, paralyze the traitor, and cut off the criminal?"

Here Mavroyeni again stopped to draw breath, and to see what effect his oratory produced; and having established, to his satisfaction, the entire propriety of picking pockets and chopping off heads, without waiting to ask the owner's leave, he passed from his affairs to mine.

"You have much employed my thoughts," said he, "since your arrival. Unfortunately, by the capitulation of these provinces, it is as difficult for a Mohammedan to find promotion in Valachia, as it is elsewhere in Turkey for a Greek. Few are the offices to which Turks may be appointed; and yet I should like to give you something good in itself, and something too that might not remove you too far from my person. To combine these conditions is a purpose which I have turned every way in my mind. In short, convinced that, with your talent, it only depends on your will to succeed in any line, I make you

* Seraskier; Greek Hospodar—the first means a Turkish general of division; the latter is the title given to the Greek governors of Valachia and Moldavia.

my divan-effendee.* It is only exchanging the sword for the pen."

"A mere trifle," thought I.—"The same turn of the wrist will do to cut a flourish on paper and on the face of an enemy; and it would only be fancying myself in the field, marshalling a parcel of soldiers, when I sit in my closet symmetrizing a heap of words, and that for the same purpose too, of defending ourselves, and of attacking our enemies. The ministers of the Porte would be delighted with their new correspondent, and my epistles could not fail to be preserved as models of a diplomatic style for the use of future ages!"

Too well, however, I knew the bey's fondness for extraordinary measures to express my surprise at the proposal. "Sir," said I, gravely, "your highness has performed so many other wonders, that I consider the additional miracle of making me all at once a sober, steady secretary, squatted all day long upon his heels, squaring lines and rounding periods, as only to depend upon your will: and as my forte in the Turkish language has hitherto been confined to the vulgar dialect, I mean this very minute to go and study the court phraseology, in order that the grandes of the capital may have no fault to find with your provincial despatches."

These suggestions made the bey reflect a little. As I bowed to take my leave, "Stop," cried he; "on second thoughts, I may do better in making you my besh-lee aga. You will have the command of my troop of janisaries; you will see the orders of the sultan carried to the different districts; you will provide escorts for the great officers of the Porte; and all that, I know, you will manage to perfection. It is true, you will also have to preside in a sort of court of justice, and to decide in all the differences between Mohammedans and Rayahs, according to the Mussulman code. But what of that! Where God gives an employment he gives the requisite capacity. My postelnic makes an excellent secretary of state;—indeed, all the better perhaps—for not knowing how to sign his name. I find no fault with my vestiariis, in his place of treasurer, though he never learned the rule of three; and as to my spatar, is he a worse minister of police, I pray, for knowing practically how at night windows are broken and riots made in the streets? You

* Divan-effendee -Turkish secretary of the hospodar's divan.

will do like all the rest: provide yourself with a clerk who gets less pay, and knows more of the business than his principal; and in every doubtful case of law, always presume the Mohammedan to be in the right; and give verdict in his favour."

I bowed as before. In truth, I liked the place of besh-lee aga as little as that of divan-effendee: but I trusted to the bey's own mutability of temper for again changing his plan. I knew the only certain way to make him persist in it was to remonstrate. I therefore silently retired.

The next day I was again called back. The wind meantime had, as I expected, shifted to another quarter. "Skanavi," cried the prince, as soon as he saw me, "thinks you will make but an indifferent judge after all. He is sure, he says, you will never look grave enough in the hall, nor consent to let your mustachios turn down instead of up. I myself cannot conceive what made you so anxious for the employment. Take my word for it, the command of my Arnoots will suit you much better."

This happened to be so exactly what I thought myself, that I now felt fain to argue the point, in order to have the nail more securely clenched; but, as my revolving the expediency of this measure in my mind gave me an appearance of hesitating, it answered all the purpose. "No words!" exclaimed the bey; "I know what suits you much better than you can pretend to do yourself. Here is your commission made out already. Take it; go home, and thank God and the bog-fever which has left so fine a vacancy for you. Your promotion will cause a few heartburnings; but I soon depend upon a good dose of leaden pills to cure them."

I now threw myself at the bey's feet to thank him for his favours, and went to assume the insignia, and to perform the duties of my new station. Acquaintance was soon made with the officers of my corps; and obedience somewhat later enforced among the privates. Many had been haïdoots or bauditti before they became soldiers, and seemed likely to end as they had begun; but though they at first looked at me rather askance, we in time came—and without needing the court phraseology—to a proper understanding.

Of one who like me expected to be but little stationary, no great establishment was required. Leaving to Prince

Brankovano to be fanned in gilt keoschks by female slaves with tufts of white peacocks' tails, I contented myself with a firwood hut for my habitation, and a few gipsies for my domestics. It is the fashion to abuse that chattering, lying, thieving, nimble race, who, invoking Mohammed among the Turks, and the Holy Virgin among the Christians, make shift in Valachia to extract gold with equal dexterity from the filth of its cities, and from the pure crystal of its mountain streams; and, if they were all to drive their wagons elsewhere, would leave the province without singers, dancers, fiddlers, fortune-tellers, tinkers, blacksmiths, or grooms. For my part, I did not dislike their attendance. Too much despised to be honest, but too timid to commit atrocious crimes, I found them lively, entertaining, and sure to succeed in whatever requires more address than courage, and more dexterity than labour.

The disorganization of the Othoman empire often obliges the sovereign to enforce by stratagem that absolute right over the lives of his immediate servants which the constitution admits; and thence does the government of the Turks frequently present a strange contrast of apparent perfidy with real good faith. Its scrupulous observance of treaties is proverbial; and has been most powerfully exemplified in the Greek provinces of Valachia and Moldavia. When they surrendered to the Turkish arms, they stipulated the preservation of Greek worship and rulers; nor has the letter of the capitulation ever been infringed upon. The governors may have been changed from the nobles of the country to the merchants of the Fanar; from men entitled to the situation by their descent, to individuals only invested with the office in consideration of their treasures: but to this day in both provinces the steeple soars above the minaret, and the worshippers of Christ take precedence of the followers of Mohammed:—I mean as far as the internal organization is concerned; for with regard to external allegiance, the Greek hospodar holds his power of his sovereign by the same tenure as the Turkish pasha. A despot in his province, he still remains the slave of the padi-shah, and his head may, at any time, be included among the fourteen which it is lawful for the imperial manslayer* to demand every day as a *douceur*, without

* The Imperial Manslayer—one of the titles assumed by his Turkish majesty.

assigning any motive—a circumstance which with some might be considered as a small drawback upon the felicity of possessing a court modelled in all its departments upon that of the Greek emperors.

With each new bey a whole new flight of officers of state and courtiers comes from Constantinople. They are generally the relations of their sovereign, unto the twentieth degree. Mavroyeni, however, averring that these family leeches, the nearer their own blood was the harder they sucked, had fewer hanging about him than any of his predecessors. My arrival, therefore, formed a desirable addition to the intimate circle. Scarce a day passed that I was not sent for to contribute my share to his entertainment. He distrusted the Greeks, and he feared the Turks. I was an amphibious animal, which he considered as equally destitute of the fins of the one and the fangs of the other. "Selim," he used to say, "will neither bite me, nor slip through my fingers."

This degree of favour, however, was not without its inconveniences. Nothing could exceed the variableness of the prince's temper. Sometimes all calm and sunshine, it was at others more stormy and boisterous than the Black Sea in March. Its changes chiefly depended on the news from Constantinople. Whenever a messenger arrived from the Porte, I used to keep out of the way until the object of his mission had transpired. One day I found the bey as desponding as if the old hag had come in person to warn him. "See," cried he, in a tone of despair, "what have I got here!" I expected to behold nothing less than a hatti-sherif purporting his recall. It was only a Vienna gazette; and the whole misfortune consisted in an article, dated from Bucharest, in which, it is true, he was somewhat roughly handled. "This ribaldry," exclaimed Mavroyeni, "composed in a garret on the Danube for the entertainment of a day, will be preserved by the scribblers of Germany in their monthly, quarterly, and annual journals; will be by the writers of the rest of Europe chronicled as an authentic document; and will finally receive endless durability in carefully written histories, intended to go down to the latest posterity as accurate pictures of the present times. Strangers will defame my character to all future ages, and not one of my countrymen will waste a drop of ink in my vindication. Ah! why was I cast among so vile a race! why was I born in such a miserable epoch! I had some

generosity, some honest pride, some noble sentiments in my composition; and it was only when I found modesty confounded with incapacity, and humility considered as meanness—when I saw virtue excite more distrust than vice, and successful vice usurp the praise of virtue—that I cast off qualities which could only prove stumblingblocks in my way, and that, like the rest, I became insidious, vindictive, and faithless; but on others fall the weight of my sins—on others the responsibility of my good dispositions depraved.”

It may be inferred from this speech, that one of Mavroyeni's great weaknesses was a desire to make a figure in history; and many were the things he did with no other view but that of their being recorded. Many also were those which on that account he enjoyed, though abstractedly they had nothing else very enjoyable in them. When an earthquake happened, or an inundation, or a fire, which laid waste half the capital, he would rub his hands, and cry out with evident marks of glee, “Materials for the annals of my reign! Posterity will say, This happened in the days of Prince Maurocenus;” and in order that posterity might say this, he would himself, I believe, like Nero, have set fire to his capital. This thirst for posthumous notoriety gave all his actions a sort of theatrical turn, which appeared quite an anomaly in a hospodar of Valachia, and made him do things which in Christendom would have been cried up to the skies, and here made him pass for insane. Nothing frightened him so much as an anonymous threat of being turned into ridicule, or mentioned in a slighting manner in some Frank publication; and I know of two or three heads that were left on their shoulders, not in consideration of what the owners might feel, but of what the journalists might write. Sometimes he thought of imitating Prince Koundemir, and composing the history of his time himself, in order to make sure of appearing in it as he wished; but for this he had not leisure yet, and put it off till after the war. At other times he talked of dubbing me his historiographer; but then I was not serious enough, and might make my readers laugh. At other times he had thoughts of sending for some French savant; but their heads seemed all turned by the revolution in their country, and they might raise the cry of liberty in Turkey. Meanwhile he never failed to distinguish by his attentions whomsoever he thought likely to give him celebrity in verse or prose. Bucharest;

would have become a nest of writers of odes and sonnets, had not sometimes the bey's fancy been difficult to hit. For occasionally, amid the most lavish praise, a single word would provoke his wrath; and that word the author would be sent to correct in the salt-mines. This place was a great damper to poetic ardour, and nipped many a bright effusion in the bud. Nothing, however, underground or above, could daunt the courage of a little hunchback poet, who conceived himself destined to restore in modern Greece the pure Hellenic taste. This lofty son of Apollo was admitted to present to the bey an ode composed in his honour on the Pindaric plan. In conformity to his model, he had despatched the prince's praise in half a dozen words, and had then passed over to the Lisbon earthquake and the fall of Babylon, which served to eke out the remainder of his performance with as many rumbling sentences as he wanted. This, however, suited not exactly Mavroyeni's less classical ideas; and the poet, finding he did not make the impression he expected, begged of the bey to expunge what he disliked; whereupon the bey tore all away save his name, observing, that that alone would say more than any rhymers could express.

The author united in his single person all the irascibility of a poet and a hunchback. He said nothing; but he sold his habitation, disposed of his moveables, and retired to the Austrian states. As soon as out of Mavroyeni's reach, he wrote him a letter to state that he had intended to compose an epic poem on his exploits; but that, since he disliked his verses, he only purposed writing in prose the history of the war, for which he had contracted with a Leipsic bookseller, and in which nothing was to be left out but himself and his proceedings.

Meanwhile, apprehensions of a very different sort from those in which the muses had any share, began to appal the stout heart of Mavroyeni. The northern frontier of his principality, immediately bordering on the Austrian states, gave him little uneasiness. This nature had sufficiently fortified by a barrier of mountains, only interrupted by a few narrow defiles scarcely less inexpugnable than the heights above. The vulnerable part of Valachia consisted in its eastern boundary, which lay open to the neighbouring province of Moldavia occupied by the Russians. Almost at the outset of the war, these barbarians had entered that principality, had taken Yassi, its

capital, and had made prisoner Ipsilanti its hospodar. It is true, that soon after a detachment from the grand Turkish army of observation stationed at Ismail to cover Bessarabia, again compelled them to evacuate this open place, and to fall back upon Chotim which they were blockading; but still they threatened every day to recover the lost ground, and to advance to where only a small rivulet, running through a dead flat, separated the confines of Moldavia from those of Valachia.

To defend this line of frontier most immediately threatened, Mavroyeni had early fixed, for the rendezvous of his chief forces, upon the plain of Fockshan, which took its name from an open place on the borders of the two principalities, belonging half to the one and half to the other. Thither were ordered in April, from Bucharest, the Arnauts, of which I commanded the principal division, together with as many seïmen and provincial janissaries as could be mustered. At the same time were marched thither from Sophia, where the vizier had now established his head-quarters, several divisions of infantry and cavalry from the grand army, the stipendiary janissaries under the command of their sangeaks, or generals by promotion, and the feudal spahees under that of their agas by descent. When all were arrived, the collective force at Fockshan might amount to twelve or thirteen thousand men. Of these various troops, however, none were to be depended upon save the Albanians, brave by nature, and only deficient in tactics and discipline. Most of the janissaries, or infantry, came from Anadoly.* They were men engaged in the professions of peace, forcibly torn from their wives and families, and who only marched on foot when they could not afford a horse. The spahees, or horse-soldiers, on the contrary, often only holding their zeeameth or timar† from some grandee as the wages of domestic service, or sent as substitutes by the real fiefholder, a woman or a child, scarce knew for the most part how to sit on horseback, and would have looked better on foot. Obligated to furnish their own equipment, and to find their own provisions, they were only occupied in calculating the length of their journey and the hour of their return; only staid while the pillage of friends or

* Anadoly, or Anatolia—as it is marked in our maps, is the name given by the Turks to Asiatic Turkey.

† Zeeameth or Timar—feudal fiefs, which only differ in the number of men properly mounted whom the holders are obliged to furnish in war.

foes afforded them a subsistence; and as soon as this mode of supply failed, considered themselves free to depart, and, without asking leave, hurried back to their homes. The provisions supplied by government, and contracted for by the commanders, were, as usual, partly from neglect and partly from fraud, at once so insufficient and so bad, that it was difficult to say which was calculated to produce the speediest mortality, their abundance or their failure. Destitute of all regular magazines, the troops must have been, if not poisoned, at least famished, but for the immense train of volunteer tellals, or retailers, who always follow a Turkish camp, impede the progress of the army, and obstruct its retreat. When the pay of the soldiers runs short, these accommodating gentry take in exchange for the necessaries with which they supply them, their arms, their accoutrements, and their horses. Thence, on a sudden emergency half the Turkish infantry appear disarmed, and half the cavalry dismounted.

These disorders Mavroyeni saw, but could not cure. Only part of the forces at Fockshan were furnished from his principality, and he durst not remind the remainder by unwelcome innovations, that the man who had been raised over the heads of so many Turks and Moslemen was a Yoor and Greek. When, however, on joining the camp, his own eyes were struck with the unwieldy and disjointed force brought together, he felt dismayed, and trembled for the issue. One day, going round with me to ascertain the observance of some new regulations which he found wholly neglected, he could not help bursting out, "You know, Selim," cried he, "I am not a coward; I have sometimes given proof of bravery, while prudence might still have seemed the virtue best suited to my station; and if at this juncture nothing but valour was required to ensure victory, I should feel little fear of a defeat. But what can one look forward to with such an assemblage; and on what quality, pre-eminent on our side, can one found the least hope of advantage in the conflict?" "On that," answered I, trying to cheer him, "which the hireling member of those admirably drilled corps of Christendom, fighting for a cause he understands not, and for interests to which he is a stranger, wholly wants; on that which alone, in the undisciplined gatherings of the Turks, often compensates for every absence of order, of tactics, and of subordination; on that which has often made the bands, led on by its powerful stimulus, beat double their

numbers ; on fanaticism ! on the enthusiastic intrepidity with which the Mussulman soldier contemns, nay, courts in battle a death which he regards as the surest passport to eternal bliss !”

Somewhat revived by this speech, “It is singular,” replied Mavroyeni, smiling, “that a Greek should be the person most desirous not to see Turkish fanaticism abate ; most anxious not to let the fair-headed northern hordes afresh plant the cross on the banks of the Bosphorus. But so my strange fate ordains ; and this blessing I can only pray the Lord in his goodness to grant !”

CHAPTER IV.

For such a length of time had the supreme vizier remained stationary at Sophia, that Constantinople began loudly to murmur at his inactivity. To restore the capital to good humour, Yousoof resolved to sacrifice a part of his army in an attempt on the Bannat of Temeswar. The attention of the few Austrian forces left in that province was, however, first to be diverted. For that purpose the commander-in-chief directed Mavroyeni to attack successively all the passes between Valachia and Transylvania, and sent him a reinforcement of about four thousand fresh troops, half foot and half cavalry. With these, and what other troops he could afford to draw from the camp at Fockshan, the bey successively tried his strength against the passes of Terzburg, of Vulcan, and of Rothenturm ; but the expeditions against these formidable defiles all ended alike in failures, and Mavroyeni now wished to give up the destructive and hopeless attempt. The vizier was more confident. Having crossed the Danube at Widden, and skirted with his army the western borders of Valachia, he renewed his orders to the prince to make, towards the north-eastern corner of his province, a more vigorous assault on the still untried passes in the vicinity of Cronstadt, a rich and commercial town, whither the fugitive boyars had sent all their treasures for safety. The bey hereupon formed at Valeni a fresh force, consisting of about three thousand spahees, already broke into the business by the

attack of the former passes, and of about two thousand five hundred Arnoots and janissaries, drawn fresh from the camp at Fockshan, and consequently new in this species of warfare. Some German deserters from the different passes, well acquainted with their intricacies and defence, were to serve as guides; and the pass of Bozan was the first to be attacked.

To me had been confided the conduct of the expedition: mine was to be the glory or the disgrace of the result; and accordingly I determined that nothing should be wanting which skill or vigilance (I do not mention courage) could effect to ensure complete success.

On the 9th of August I sent on from Valeni six hundred spahees, who the same day reached and threw themselves into an abandoned intrenchment opposite the Austrian lines. On the 10th I led on the principal division, composed of eight hundred Arnoots and twelve hundred more spahees. We halted within three leagues of our advanced guard, and were joined a few hours later by the remainder of the cavalry, and by all the infantry. Early on the 11th our whole collective force arrived under the heights of Poru-ilke, the first object of contention.

To secure this commanding eminence was a point both essential and difficult. Gently sloping towards the Austrian lines, it would, on the first intimation of such a design, immediately have been occupied by a troop of horse in observation to their right. For the purpose of deceiving this corps I made our spahees and janissaries advance leisurely under the hill, as if with the intention only to pass round its base, and while they engaged the attention of the Austrians, our Arnoots contrived in the most practicable part on the reverse of the eminence, to drag our artillery up to its top; only halting withing a few yards of the brow, and of the enemy's line of sight. This manœuvre at last happily achieved, I gave the signal for all the columns which still were skirting the base of the hill, to wheel to the right, and to scramble up its sides; and the moment the Austrian cavalry set forward in hopes to gain the summit the first, the whole platform appeared, as if by magic, covered with our Arnoots, who forthwith opened their fire.

At this unexpected sight the Austrians, already in full gallop, again suddenly stopped; for a moment looked in unutterable vexation alternately at our Albanians above,

whom they durst not go up to, and at our spahees below, who already baffled their pursuit; and at last again wheeled about, and in despair resumed their original position.

It was a fine thing to behold the troops, till then marching in the hollow, all at once, under the cheers of their comrades on the hill, rush at full speed up its steep and rugged sides, cut their way through copse and brier, scale heights that seemed inaccessible, leap like goats from crag to crag, stumble, fall, rise again, help or push each other on—the foremost serving as stepping-stones to those behind, who in their turn hauled up the others—and this, amid the thunder of the enemy's incessant fire, which our troops tried to drown in their shouts.

At last, with incredible labour, they overcame every obstacle, vaulted on the summit of the hill, and there joined and shook hands with their comrades already occupying the ground.

In this eligible position, commanding the Austrian lines in front, and screened in the rear by a curtain of brush-wood which left the enemy equally unable to guess our numbers or to effect our dislodgment, we spent the night. While darkness lasted, the atmosphere was clear, and the stars twinkled in the firmament with their brightest radiance; but with the sun rose so dense a fog, that it seemed to spread an impenetrable veil before every object, and things became less visible in the morning than they had been during the night. Determined to avail myself of this invisibility, I sent out the foremost spahees—still watching as well as watched from their intrenchment—to charge in flank the troop of Austrian horse, again immoveably fixed to the right of the lines.

Attacked on a side on which they thought themselves secure, and prevented by the fog from discerning the number of their assailants, these heroes were seized with a sudden panic, took to flight at the first fire, and yielded up to my spahees their advantageous position.

Meantime I led the main body of my troops down the hill. The right side of its declivity was screened by the continuation of the copse through which my Arnaoots had penetrated, the left side by that of the precipice which my janissaries had scaled, and in front hung the mist, which equally prevented our seeing or being seen at ten yards' distance.

A pretended Austrian deserter had engaged to point out to us the most practicable mode of turning the

enemy's intrenchments. The fellow was riding by my side, but a something suspicious in his look and manner induced me closely to watch his motions. Suddenly I saw him waver, pull up his horse, pretend to turn aside for some purpose or other, and thinking he had hit his opportunity, dart forward, rush by me, and run away at full speed.

Our approach, our numbers, and our disposition would, thanks to his agility, have been announced to the enemy just at the critical moment. I immediately pursued my fugitive, and fired both my pistols at him: but the fog prevented my taking aim, or even seeing where the traitor went. He soon vanished out of sight.

Little, however, did his deceit avail him. I scarce had proceeded fifty yards, ere I heard a something heavy tumble down the precipice, from which as I advanced arose dismal groans. They told me of the fate of the double deserter. The fog had only saved him from being shot, to make him break his neck.

In pursuing the scoundrel, however, I had got on some way in front of my men; and on doubling a projecting crag I all at once found myself in the midst of a cluster of Austrian hussars. They had come out from their lines to reconnoitre, and had been attracted in our direction by the firing of my pistols—the only warlike sound which broke the silence of our march; but had not dared to advance beyond the jutting rocks.

At this rencounter I gave myself up for lost. Still I determined to make some little attempt at an escape, ere I surrendered at discretion. "Friends," cried I, therefore, in Italian, "so you heard my signal!—Assist a Christian, rid me of my turban, and let me have a hat."

At this address all cheered me with loud huzzas, and every cap was waved in air. While every arm was thus engaged, I seized my time. Already I could discern the tramp of our horse: suddenly I wheeled about, and with the speed of lightning galloped back to my column. A volley of musketry, it is true, was sent after me; but the balls only whizzed about my ears: none hit my person; and the hussars, afraid to stay any longer, immediately sheered off.

In the midst of our march the mist all at once cleared up, the hidden landscape became visible, and, within a pistol-shot of our column, rose in full sight before us the Austrian lines. A tremendous fire saluted us immediately.

I only answered by giving the signal for the assault; and while the body of spahees who had dislodged the enemy's cavalry fell upon their lines in flank, we stormed them in front.

Our Arnoots scrambled, with the help of their sabres, up the slope of the batteries, and our janissaries extracted with their teeth the matches from the guns. The palisades were broken down, and the chevaux-de-frise filled up with the slain: for many were the brave that fell between the first assault and the forcing of the lines. At last the enemy's fire began to slacken, and their numbers diminished. A breach was made, and from all sides our troops poured into the intrenchments like a resistless torrent. But though we beheld heaps of killed, we found nothing alive. The Austrians had fled with such precipitation as not even to spike the guns they left behind.

On advancing to the custom-house and other buildings which lay behind the now mastered fortifications, they too appeared abandoned. From the high ground which these edifices occupied the Austrians might distinctly be discerned, already at a considerable distance, trying to gain the narrow part of the defile which separated us from the town of Cronstadt.

Harassed as we were, I still wished not to lose a single instant in the pursuit. We therefore continued to press close upon the heels of the fugitives. It is true, that in the ravine which we were entering, three hundred men in close order might with ease have arrested a whole army: but in the panic of the Austrians every man among them was flying singly. One troop, indeed, of about thirty, had kept together, and tried for a moment to check our progress. It only succeeded to increase the bloodshed, and was soon entirely cut to pieces.

Presently, on turning some projecting ground, we beheld at a distance the outlet of the defile, and at the now almost undoubted certainty of pushing on to Cronstadt without interruption, a general shout of joy arose among our men.

The only thing in the prospect which we did not much like was a fancied appearance of some of the enemy, till now in full retreat, slackening their pace, soon after to halt, and face about. At first, indeed, we doubted the accuracy of our optics, but presently we no longer could help yielding to the evidence of our senses.

On the first intelligence which had reached Cronstadt of the danger that threatened the pass of Bozan, three thousand men—nearly all the place contained—had been despatched to strengthen this important outpost. Early on its march the first division of these troops met the foremost of the fugitives, and learning from them that the lines had been evacuated, pressed on, in hopes to stop our progress ere we had cleared the defile. All their comrades whom they fell in with were forced to turn back with them: only they were placed in the rear of the new comers, in order that our exhausted strength might have chiefly to contend with their own still undiminished vigour.

Little indeed were we in a condition to resist a charge of fresh cavalry, when, from the distant eminence on whose brow these new troops first rose in sight, they bore down upon us with all the advantage of a continued declivity. Still I resolved to make a stand, thinking the corps a small one; but when, just as we had engaged with this first division, a second, till then concealed in a hollow, appeared on the hillock, I felt the game was up, and not a moment must be lost in making good our retreat.

On the first symptoms of the enemy's rallying, I had judged my harassed men in need of some extraordinary support. With this view I infused into them copious draughts of courage in a liquid shape. It did its office; speedily reached the heart, and mounted to the brain. A small party became so inflamed by its inspiration with the wish immediately to gain heaven, that, not content to be quietly killed on the spot, they even climbed up a ledge of rocks overhanging the road, whence—having already arrived so much nearer their destination while alive—they thought their way would be shorter after they had been despatched. Situated as we were, such a design was not to be discouraged. While this forlorn hope of self-devoted dells contrived by means of the trees, stones, &c. which they hurled down the precipice, to retard the progress of the Austrians, the rest of our troops effected in tolerable order their retrograde motion; and, after setting on fire the contumace,* and abandoning the dearly purchased intrenchments, with little additional loss regained the Valachian territory.

* The Contumace—name given by the Austrians to the custom-houses of the Hungarian passes.

Seeing that the impending night prevented the enemy from pursuing us on our own ground, we now slackened our pace, and in a more leisurely manner proceeded back to Valeni.

One thing very sensibly affected my troops. It was the losing in the retreat most of the prisoners they had made in the pursuit. The stoutest and most active had found means to recover their liberty in the first confusion of our flight: the wounded and the disabled alone had remained in our hands, but these only impeded our march. Half of them, however, had the discretion soon to die of their own accord by the way; and those that seemed perversely determined to live on for no purpose but to give us trouble, found their proceeding of little advantage to themselves. They were mostly submitted to the operation of having their upper extremities severed from the remainder of their bodies, in order that the latter might encumber their captors no longer, and the former be saved only for the sake of the premium. I tried, indeed, to keep a few of the best looking heads fast on their shoulders; but it was a business in which my men felt extremely jealous of my interference. "They liked," they said, "to settle it their own way."

We were marching on pell-mell in the dark, when, come to a somewhat uneven pass, we found a saddle-horse tied to a tree. My Arnoots recognised the animal as the steed of one of their comrades, who had gone on before with a Hungarian officer badly wounded, whom he wished to preserve—not so much from excess of humanity, as for the sake of his ransom. A few yards farther on we stumbled upon a man lying in the road. Him I first supposed to be the Hungarian, who, unable to keep body and soul together on so rough a journey, had given up the ghost, and been left in that place, as unworthy of farther conveyance. On examining more closely, it proved to our utter astonishment to be the Arnoot himself, quite dead, and with a deep gash in his side. As to the officer, no trace of him appeared.

The only idea which naturally suggested itself to my mind was that some of my Albanians had themselves despatched their companion, for the sake of his envied prize: but this surmise I did not think it expedient to publish. The party around me all were, or pretended to be, convinced, that Kara Mustapha must have been murdered by his own prisoner; and I was forced at last to

grant that nothing seemed so likely to put a fellow of Kara Mustapha's size and strength off his guard, as a man half-dead, bound hands and feet, and flung like a clothes-bag across his horse's shoulders.—“Nay, so proud,” added I, “does the culprit seem to have been of his achievement, that he has not even taken the murdered man's horse to assist him in his flight, but has walked away on foot, leaving the animal secured, on purpose to tell the tale of his prowess!”

My Arnoots paid little attention to this remark; but, hearing something stir among the bushes, all ran to the spot, and found the Hungarian, whom they had supposed far away, lying behind a tuft of trees, with his clothes half torn off; and, what seemed more surprising, they found not my suspicions, but their own, confirmed!—the officer himself, when accused of having killed his captor, scorning to deny the charge, and looking with a sort of complacency at the ensanguined blade of the knife with which he had done the deed, and which he still held firmly grasped in his hand.

“Wretch,” now cried I, indignantly, in Italian, “what could induce you to murder the preserver of your life?”

“Its cold-blooded destroyer, rather call him,” answered the officer, in a voice almost extinct. “Finding that I encumbered his horse, and could not go on foot, the miscreant wanted to strip and then to kill me. A cutlass still lay concealed along my thigh. My hands being untied to take off my jacket, I drew out the knife unperceived, and, while the ruffian leaned over me to unclasp my belt, buried the trusty blade in his heart; then raised myself, and tried to mount his horse. The task exceeded my strength: feeling I could not accomplish it, I crept to these bushes, to die among them unperceived. Alas! even this, I find, is denied me!”

Fast as the officer's life seemed fleeting away, yet were the Arnoots, in their thirst to revenge one of their own body, still going to hasten its departure; when I interposed, and clasping their intended victim in my arms, tried to avert their sullen rage. During his narration, I had imagined I recognised in the dying man's disfigured countenance that of an old acquaintance—I may say, a sort of benefactor. I remembered in the days of my ciceroneship at Pera a young gentleman from Hermanstadt attached to the imperial mission, who had shown me much kindness. He was then, from his extraordinary

beauty, called the Hungarian Apollo; and indeed, was one of the finest youths I ever had beheld: not less brave than handsome, or less amiable than brave. Not that, with the manifold temptations which assailed him on all sides, he could be quoted as a perfect pattern of that virtue which we chiefly prize in an anchorite: on the contrary, as a faithful biographer of other people's lives as well as my own, I am forced, though sorry, to acknowledge that, where a fine eye shot forth its keenest darts his heart was but too vulnerable; that seldom on the banks of the Bosphorus an unknown fruit of a tender but illicit intercourse came to maturity which was not at least laid at his door; that the infant son of an ambassadress of the highest rank—a child beautiful as an angel—bore to the son of Herman so shocking a resemblance, as to make all the prudes of Pera try to blush whenever his name was mentioned; and that even one day suddenly seized, in the midst of all the diplomatic beaux and belles collected under the large plane-tree of Boyook-dere,* blindfolded, whipped into a close araba, whirled away no one knew whither, and during three whole days ensuing given up for lost, he had, according to the common report, employed that time with a lady of the most exalted description—of the imperial blood itself—in a mode exceedingly disrespectful to the princess's far-distant husband, the venerable pasha of Erzerum: but waylaid as Miazinsky was by the fair sex, he only, as it were, reluctantly yielded to positive violence, and for the sole benignant purpose of preventing a parcel of angels from exposing their own frailty in public, and tearing out each other's eyes; seriously bewailed his own beauty which brought him into these painful dilemmas; and was so far from confining his benevolent exertions to young and handsome females, that scarce an act of humanity or kindness of any sort took place where he resided, which, when traced to its source, was not brought home to the blushing Hungarian, who kept all his other charitable actions equally secret with those performed in behalf of young ladies from fifteen to fifty.

While, however, the youth's discretion stood every test—inasmuch that a lady of very great fashion once seriously fell out with him, apprehending he felt not sufficiently proud of her favours—his courage seemed on

* Boyook-dere—beautiful village on the shores of the Bosphorus, chiefly inhabited by Frank ambassadors and their suite.

one occasion entirely to forsake him. It was at a gay supper with various foreigners. Another *jeune de langue*—envious of his more favourable reception in a quarter where both had been candidates for sweet smiles—insulted him very grievously, and even went so far as to add to opprobrious language contemptuous and threatening gestures. Every person looked aghast, expecting to see weapons of death drawn across the very supper-table, and the yet untouched dainties all deluged in blood: but, to the amazement of all beholders, the Hungarian, though reddening up to the eyes, continued otherwise unmoved, and made no signs of demanding satisfaction. I alone, who happened to be leaning over the back of a chair next to his own, knew what to think: for when a neighbour asked him in a whisper how he could put up with such behaviour, I heard him answer under his breath, “Why disturb the short pleasure of so many cheerful guests? first let us finish this good supper, and then cut each other’s throats!”

And so, in fact, it was arranged. Never did Miazinsky’s antagonist digest the good cheer of that night. Ere the dawn arose Miazinsky most religiously killed him, begged his pardon for so doing, and then threw himself at his ambassador’s feet, to relate to him the necessity he had been under of removing his colleague. The baron advised him not to wait for his answer—a hint which he took: but as he was a favourite with all the family, the daughters included, and had the concurring testimony of the whole supper-table to his unimpeachable behaviour, the single life he had shortened was excused in favour of the many in whose production he had been accessary; and his pardon was, through dint of great interest, at last obtained. Still was he obliged to relinquish the diplomatic career, for which he seemed little qualified; but having shown greater aptitude for the military profession, he failed not, in consequence of his high character and good conduct, as soon as the affair blew over, to obtain rapid promotion in the army.

Not only all these circumstances, but the person to whom they related, were still more distinctly impressed upon my memory. I still saw the young man at Pera, as he entered the internuncio’s drawing-room—his fine athletic figure set off to the greatest advantage by his close Hungarian dress—striking every person present with the grace and elegance of his appearance, and

causing every fan to flutter like the leaves of the poplar-tree, when there arises a sudden gust of wind. I even remembered that, little as I was apt to envy others for their looks, I had once run to a large mirror in order to compare notes with the dazzling stranger; and though the poor creature now laying naked at my feet, incrustated with clotted blood and dust—his eyes half-closed, and his pallid sunken features all indented with scars—differed most wofully in many respects from the brilliant image in my mind; yet did I discern in a few others such strong marks of identity, that I could only satisfy myself by asking, point-blank, whether I beheld the Count Miazinsky, once in the Austrian mission at Pera.

At these words the dying officer again opened his languid eyes, and looking at me earnestly, as if in his turn to find out who could thus recognise him in his present miserable condition, faintly answered, "I am he, indeed: but you who ask the question, may I know who you are?"

"One," I replied, "whom, in the number of those you were eager to serve, you may not recollect; but one who cannot forget you, and would wish to do for your comfort what little this dreary place may leave in his power!"

Then turning to my Arnauts, who grinned with impatience at the constraint imposed upon their fury:—"The prophet," exclaimed I, "has given the faithful the choice of making their enemies captives, or of killing them on the spot; but he allows his followers not to begin with the one, and to end with the other. To this officer his poor remnant of life had been granted. It could not be retaken from him. In defending it against his aggressor, he has only made use of his undoubted right. He had, therefore, reconquered his freedom, when again I seized upon his person; and on that score he now is mine—mine alone; and whoever shall at present dare to attempt his life, robs me of my property, and shall have me to account with for the deed!"

The assertion was true, and the tone made its truth be respected. Proceeding to do for the officer what little the untoward circumstances of the hour and place permitted, I made him swallow a few drops of the wine we had found in the house of contumace. On its wetting his lips, he seemed for an instant to revive, and exclaimed, "Alas! it is my own menesh you are giving me; that to which I used to treat my dearest friends. I may now drink it myself. Never more shall I see one to make

welcome to this cordial of my own growth!"—and, in truth, the transient spark of seeming amendment which enlivened the stranger's countenance was only a last gleam of the extinguishing lamp.

I wished to have staid with him till daylight on the spot, or to have had him conveyed on a litter to where we meant to halt; but the proposal to carry an infidel on Islamite shoulders, even though I offered to take my turn with the rest, was received by my proud Moslemen with such haughtiness that I dared not insist. All I could do for the poor Hungarian was to have him laid across a baggage mule, and to walk by his side; trying with one hand to steady his body, while with the other I supported his head.

In this position I saw him, as we marched on, by degrees grow fainter and fainter. At last, on some inward anxiety appearing to agitate his mind, I again stopped; and—in order that he might be relieved of what made his fleeting soul depart in such sadness—conjured him to confide to me his utmost thoughts and wishes.

"Then would you," said he, at last, after some hesitation—and collecting all his remaining strength to speak more intelligibly—"would you do a dying man one last great favour, which God and your own heart alone can repay?"

"Any thing in my power," I eagerly answered.

"God bless you!" replied he. "Observe; my mother's address there is not time to give you. But knowing me, you will easily discover it. Send, oh send her—with a son's last duty, love, and gratitude—the account of my death, and a lock of my hair; and beg of her to divide that last token—too well she knows where, and with whom!"

This request I pledged myself punctually to perform: then tried to administer the only consolation in my power—that of sympathy. Pressing the youth in my arms, "I feel," exclaimed I, "how hard it is to quit life in a strange land, far away from the endearments of parents and of friends."

"Of these," answered the Hungarian, "I might have been deprived even dying nearer home; and it then would have been with greater bitterness. Here at least I can fancy all I miss, and the idea soothes my soul during the few yet remaining minutes, after which it no longer will signify where Miazinsky ceased to be!"

Tears started from my eyes: they fell on the officer's wan cheek. A slight pressure of his hand told me he felt their value, and thanked the giver for them. Soon, however, his breath almost became imperceptible. At last a sort of convulsive tremor ran through all his limbs, and again vanished. I examined his countenance. The moon, which had just risen in her full splendour, cast a bright gleam over his features. I saw him again open his eyes, and fix them upon me with an expression of gratitude which his palsied lips no longer could confirm. He, however, seized the hand I held clasped round his waist, made a sort of feeble effort to bring it to his mouth, once more uttered a faint sigh, stretched out his limbs, and died!—Eternal bliss attend his departed spirit!

His poor remains I wished to have preserved entire, in order to honour their funeral with decent rites; but on that subject my Arnoots were intractable. Forced, therefore, to content myself with the ample braids of the youth's raven hair, which I claimed for the purpose he had specified, I let my Albanians dispose as they chose of the remainder of his person.

After marching almost the whole night without interruption, we stopped just before daybreak to take a little rest. Having thus somewhat refreshed ourselves, we again proceeded, and towards the evening re-entered Valeni—little thanked for laurels which, though we certainly reaped, we could not carry home; and only loaded with a few heads, which I would have felt little sure of not being those of my own slain Arnoots, bagged by their companions, were it not that Moslemen warriors prudently shave their polls. Should my reader feel disposed to quarrel with my very minute account of this expedition, let him remember that I write principally for my own amusement; and to me, what event of the war could be so interesting as the affair of Bozan, of which I was the hero?

At Valeni we soon received intelligence that not only that defile, but all the other passes into Transylvania were fortified in such a way as to preclude all further chance of retrieving our disappointment. The scheme of forcing them was therefore given up, and soon I received orders to march all the troops back to Fockshan, where from all quarters fresh clouds seemed to be gathering.

CHAPTER V.

THE Russians under Romanzow had early in the season retaken Yassi. The Austrians under Coburg had advanced to Adjoud. So far from heeding a bim-bashee,* with about eighteen hundred men, whom Mavroyeni sent about the middle of October to dislodge from that place their outposts, they still pushed on, and at last took possession of the town of Fockshan. Valachia now seemed in the utmost danger: the approaching winter alone suspended its fate. The combined armies, considering the entire occupation of Moldavia as progress sufficient for that year, went into quarters. Yassi became the resting-place of the Russians; Coburg staid at Romano; while we remained, not entirely at ease, in our camp near Fockshan.

On the other side of Valachia things wore not a more favourable aspect. Youssoof-vizier had, by his irruption in the Banat of Temeswar, successively elated the empire to the highest pitch of joy, and plunged it into the deepest affliction. So sudden had been the reduction of the province, and so great the terror spread by the vizier's success, that Buda, nay, the Austrian capital itself, already fancied the Turks at its gates:—but a mightier hand than that of man marked Mehadieli as the utmost point of Youssoof's progress. Under the walls of that fortress the pestilential influence of a low marshy country, doubly envenomed by a season unusually wet, carried off his men in such numbers, that, in order to preserve a few, he was obliged abruptly to abandon his conquests. With the same speed with which he had led into the Bannat a numerous and exulting army, he led out of it a handful of troops enfeebled by disease; and was compelled, at the close of the year, to conclude with the Austrians for the first three months of that ensuing, a mortifying armistice.

In the naval operations of the Turks a no less entire revolution had taken place, from unbounded hope to com-

* Bim-bashee—Turkish colonel.

plete despondency. When, early in the spring of 1788, Hassan Capitan-pasha, with eighteen ships of the line, twenty frigates, and gunboats innumerable, sailed up the Euxine to seek the Russian squadron near Kinburn, the whole empire augured from his valour and his force the most brilliant success. But when, as month succeeded month, defeat followed defeat;—when first Hassan's gunboats were destroyed by Nassau in the Liman; when, next, his fleet was repulsed with loss by Paul Jones at Gluboka; and when, lastly, his entire armament was annihilated by these two commanders united off Kinburn, terror and dismay gradually filled each Moslemin heart, all clothed themselves in sackcloth and ashes, and all saw the hand of Providence raised against the breakers of the peace.

What, then, became the consternation of the faithful, when, on the 7th of December, Potemkin took the important fortress of Ockzakow! The shock produced by this event baffles all powers of description—and, after a year marked by the imminent danger of Valachia, the loss of Moldavia, the destruction of the Turkish army, the annihilation of the Othoman fleet, an inglorious armistice concluded with Austria, and a bulwark of the empire lost to the Russians, calamities seemed destined not to cease until the race of Othman had been driven out of Europe. The populace of Constantinople, whose discontent at the distant defeats was still inflamed by the detachments from the vizier's army which daily under their own eyes repassed the Bosphorus in the most shattered condition, with as loud a clamour demanded Youssoof's head, as before they had demanded his appointment.

Meanwhile, renouncing all further schemes of offensive warfare, the vizier determined to concentrate his forces as much as possible for the defence of the empire itself. He sent Mavroyeni five thousand additional men, which, distributed between Ardgis, Rimnik, Brankovano, Valeni, and Kimpina, seemed to render secure the frontier of the principality; and himself, during the suspension of hostilities, marched into Bessarabia.

Already was he lifting his hand, to strike from this new point a blow in Moldavia, which promised us, not only a return of security, but a renewal of success, when an event took place which damped all our hopes and paralyzed all our strength. This was the demise—unan-

nounced by any previous warning—of the Sultan Abdool-Hameed, and the accession of his nephew Selim. Without the smallest preparation for so great a change, this prince suddenly passed, on the 7th of April, 1789, from the confinement of the harem to the throne of the Turkish despots.

Like all young men, Selim the Third was eager to undo all that his predecessor had done; and scarce had his beard attained a fortnight's growth* when the two chief favourites of his uncle, Youssoof and Hassan, were suddenly removed from their exalted situations. Some difference, however, marked the manner. Hassan's age, his long services, and his former successes still inspired for the veteran hero a sort of habitual veneration which the new monarch durst not wholly disregard. His disgrace was disguised under the semblance of a new favour. While the Capitan-bey† Geretlu Hussein stepped into his place of high admiral, he rose to that of beglier-bey of Roumili: but, not only was he removed from what seemed his proper element; he was commanded to march as seraskier of the army of Bessarabia, and to recover the lost fortress of Ockzakow. Youssoof, less rooted in the affections of the nation, received a more unqualified dismissal. From the rank of supreme vizier he was degraded to that of pasha of Widden; while, the more to envenom the sting, the governor of that city, his inveterate enemy, was raised in his place to the supreme vizirate. This new commander-in-chief bore the surname of Djenazé, or the dead, from the state which his extreme ill health made him seem fast approaching.

As to Mavroyeni, he experienced not any immediate change in his situation. While danger was rife, and energy required, he could not be spared; but the fall of his patron let loose all the forked tongues of envy, and a store of accusations was laid in, to be preferred against him at the first favourable opportunity. In fact, there was not a crime or an error which his enemies did not lay to his charge. He had mismanaged matters of which ministers never gave him the direction, embezzled sums which the treasury never sent, and cut off heads, not even for a moment absent from the shoulders of their legiti-

* A fortnight's growth—a new sultan only lets his beard grow from the day of his accession.

† Capitan-bey—first in command in the Turkish navy after the capitan pasha.

mate owners. Indeed, if truth lies between the two extremes, he might be proved to have been a perfect character, from labouring at the same time under the most opposite and incompatible charges: for he was at once rapacious and profuse, timid and foolhardy, precipitate and dilatory, too lenient and too severe, a bigot and an infidel. But if, therefore, it seemed not so easy to determine in what precisely consisted his guilt, it was not the less evident that the punishment was quite decided upon, and would be inflicted as soon as the sentence, already pronounced *in petto*, could safely be executed. Of this circumstance Mavroyeni himself appeared fully sensible; and as in every Greek who departed from Bucharest, he beheld an informer going to give fresh evidence against him, so, in every Turk who arrived in the place, he saw only a messenger of his disgrace.

Thus situated—knowing that the instant his principality was lost he too must fall; and yet hopeless of further supplies for its defence from the new vizier,—rather anxious for his discomfiture than eager for his success, he exhausted all his private treasure in raising at his own expense a fresh body of troops, and, with what more men and ammunition he was able to withdraw from the force at Focksham, marched to Rimnik, there to organize an attack to be made the same day on all the passes into Transylvania: hoping that, distracted by the multiplicity of points to defend, the enemy might in some one or other prove vulnerable. He himself undertook to conduct the expedition against the pass of Temesch; but whether the Austrians were informed of his approach, or only suspected his design, they met it by so vigorous a sally from their lines, that, before he could issue the final orders for a general attack, he was repulsed and forced back with considerable loss upon Gloyest. The scheme thus defeated ere it had time to ripen, Mavroyeni recalled his troops from the Hungarian confines, and returned much dispirited to Rimnik, which henceforth he made his head-quarters.

At the very outset of the affair of Temesch I had been wounded in the thigh by a ball nearly spent, which, grazing the bone, by degrees produced a painful exfoliation. Thus disabled for some time from serving, I left Rimnik, and returned to Bucharest, whither the bey's own surgeon—the only one in the principality who knew a shin-bone from a drumstick—was sent once or twice to forward my cure.

In what way, soon after the minor events here described, Cobourg and the Austrians, twice threatened by the Turks with annihilation, were twice saved by the unexampled diligence of Suwarrow, who completely beat the Turks, first at Fockshan, next at Rimnik—to which place Djenazé-vizier himself had marched with all his forces, in hopes of saving Valachia—are events preserved from oblivion in the imperishable annals of general history, and which therefore I need not detail. Such at Rimnik was the rout of the Turks, notwithstanding Djenazé—too ill to sit on horseback—held up the Koran from his carriage, and ordered the cannon to be fired on his own troops to prevent their retreat, that the whole Othoman camp fell into the hands of the enemy, while the very course of the Danube became obstructed by the number of wagons and corpses drowned in the vizier's flight across its crimsoned tide.

For a considerable time before this decisive event, Bucharest had been in that hopeless state—not devoid, perhaps, of its peculiar luxury—in which people, regardless of a future they may never witness, and unwilling any longer to make sacrifices of which they may never reap the distant fruits, yield without further restraint to every wildest suggestion of the present moment; and, induced by unavoidable ruin, rush with premeditated thoughtlessness into all the bold merriment of despair. Men and women who never before had dared to stir disencumbered of the trammels of public opinion, and had measured every movement, studied every gesture, and prepared every look which might chance to have a witness, until it was become impossible any longer to tell how nature had moulded them, now resumed their original air, and carriage, and tone; and now for the first time cast away the irksome shackles of society, to display their genuine native character. No longer listening to prudential considerations, and committing to the winds all idle fears of the world, the irascible now yielded to their temper, the coarse to their brutality, the malignant to their spite, the covetous to their love of rapine, nay, even the prudes to their longing for open and unconstrained gallantry. I remember in particular one lady, besieged by a numerous troop of admirers, whose conjugal fidelity seemed proof, at the first opening of the campaign, against every form of blockade or of storm, but whose virtue exactly kept pace with the events of the war. At every check our

forces met with, her severity was seen to relax. Each battle lost removed some former scruple; and the bulletins from the army were the billet-doux in which her lovers might read their chance of success. Unapproachable while Youssoof's irruption in the Bannat was the theme of every conversation—cold as ice during the attack upon the Transylvanian passes, she began to relent after the affair of Temesch—after the battle of Fockshan she bade her lovers hope—and the defeat of Rimnik became the signal for her unconditional surrender—"She had not the presumption," she said, "to think that, on the loss of a province, that of her poor virtue could be of any consequence!"

Equally modest were, on the score of their character, most of Mavroyeni's courtiers: they deemed their reputation full as little worth preserving as the lady. The most straightforward conduct in that respect was that of the bey's own nephews, his grammaticus and his cameraz. These two youths agreed in conceiving that, on their employments leaving them, they might leave their employer. They only differed in their mode of doing it. When affairs began to look unpromising, the grammaticus begged to resign his office; the cameraz, on the contrary, expressed great indignation at his brother's baseness, and swore that for his part he never would ask to quit his benefactor. Nor did he: for he afterward went without leave. If, however, some public personages deserted the capital before the prince thought of moving, others, to compensate, staid quietly when he went away. I mistake: as he went out at one gate of the city to retire to Turkey, his boyars went out at the other, to meet and to welcome the Austrians, who immediately after the battle of Rimnik marched to his capital.

For my part, though I do not desire to boast of my fidelity, and might have pleaded, for staying, the bad grace with which—owing to my still festering wound—I must limp in his suite, I stupidly followed my patron. My great fear was that of seeing him miserably dejected on quitting that sovereignty which he had laboured so hard to obtain; but in this I was agreeably disappointed. After the depression produced by his defeats, the bustle and excitement of the journey rather caused in his spirits a sort of exhilaration. "Who ever ascended a throne," cried he, as we went out at the gates, "to sit at his ease?

Who, that feared for his head, ever accepted a sultan's favours?—come death when it may, I have lived to be a prince!”

This temper lasted until we reached the Danube. Arrived in sight of that noble stream, which a few years before he had crossed in the first bloom of his grandeur, and which now again he was to cross in the decline of his fortunes, stripped of all his dearly purchased honours, a fugitive and a presumptive criminal, he paused, cast back a wistful look, and unable to tear himself away at once from the object of his life's long-cherished schemes, refused to proceed farther, until informed that Cobourg had actually entered his capital. This intelligence he had not long to wait for. He soon heard how the victors had been hailed by the nobles of the country, then bade his principality adieu for ever, and stepped into the boat.

Out of evil sometimes comes good. Djenazé, with the battle of Rimnik, also lost the vizirate; but being called the dead already, Selim probably thought it not worth while to take his life. Having, however, in consequence of his lieutenant's reverses and others, conceived a surfeit of the war, the sultan now conferred the high office vacated on Hassan, our old capitan-pasha, whose pacific disposition suited his sovereign's change of sentiments. Immediately on his appointment, the new commander proceeded to the head-quarters now at Schumlah, whither, with reviving hopes and spirits, now likewise went Mavroyeni, to meet his ancient master.

It would have delighted a stoic to see these two old personages, who so well understood each other, greet and wag their beards together. Such, it is said, was their emotion on first embracing, as absolutely to force from their features of brass a few iron tears. None, however, remain to confirm the assertion. In fact, the prince and the pasha were all in all to each other. To Hassan, the assistance of Mavroyeni seemed the pledge of diplomatic success; while to Mavroyeni, the support of Hassan seemed positively as essential as physical existence. But short, alas, was the joy! Hassan, like Moses, had been destined to view from afar only the object of all his wishes, the end of all his toils—the long-sought and at last remotely glimmering peace. Fate had ordained he should not witness its consummation. After a whole winter spent in arduous and tiresome negotiations, an armistice was only just agreed upon, when on the 20th of March, 1790,

Ghazi Hassan, after a few hours' illness, ended as others do his long and brilliant career. His enemies were accused of having shortened his life; but he was ninety when he died.

Of Hassan nothing now remains save his memory. This, however, will endure in all its splendour while the Turkish empire lasts. The single cloud* which dims the setting sun cannot produce forgetfulness of the many hours during which it shed its undiminished radiance! As a youth I witnessed Hassan's expedition to the Morea. More matured, I followed him in that to Egypt. His history, his achievements, exerted over my destinies that remote but unceasing influence which the luminary of the world exerts alike over all the living things of the earth, whether he directly gladdens them with his aspect, or whether, lighting up other regions, he be hidden from their view. As I beheld the meridian glory, so I beheld the last refulgence of his dazzling career; and not only while Hassan lived did my fate remain indirectly linked to his fortunes, but even at his death did the mournful chill which pervaded the empire extend its benumbing influence to my remote and narrow orbit. Of the bright beams which he poured forth in his zenith, a few had been reflected upon my humble person, and the long shadow he left at his decline involved my fate likewise in its wide extending darkness.

His demise again raised the hopes and views of the party inclined for the war. A simple aga of Rusthook was appointed his successor, merely because many years before, this turbulent Moslem had contrived to raise a quarrel with Prince Repnin, when that nobleman passed through his town as messenger of peace. Private animosity was considered the pledge of military skill. I need scarcely add, that in proportion as Hassan had been a friend to Mavroyeni, Hassan's successor thought himself bound to be his rancorous enemy; but Mavroyeni had a secret enemy, not in the least distrusted by him, far more dangerous than all that stood confessed—and this was himself.

The ever-present foe in question—whose counsels uniformly prevailed over those of all his friends—had contrived by degrees wholly to estrange him from his nephew Stephan, the then droguman of the fleet; one of those rarely seen characters who, averse to intrigue

* The single cloud—Alluding, I suppose, to Hassan's defeat at Tobak.

and cabal, only found their stability in office on the broad and solid basis of their straightforward services; in view of these find their assistance equally sought by whatever faction rises into power; and if, from their unenterprising spirit, they seldom attain those lofty but narrow pinnacles where elevation sits in the lap of danger, little reck the comparative lowliness of the niches they occupy; and while their chiefs constantly rise and fall, think themselves amply repaid for their want of conspicuous situations, by the safety they enjoy, and the clear conscience they preserve: and the man who, never above nor ever below the duties of his office, had seen Ghazi Hassan succeeded in the command of the navy by Hassan of Crete, and Hassan of Crete by Hussein the Georgian; and had still, under the minion of the sultan as under the idol of the people, preserved unimpaired and unimpeached his fidelity towards his principals—because, in order the better to watch the course, and to counteract the consequences of the intrigues carried on against his uncle, he formed no intrigues himself—because he exhausted not his strength in idle clamour, and exasperated not his enemies by useless invectives,—was, by his infatuated relation, in consideration of all his good qualities, and in return for all his great services, devoted to feel the last effects of his now almost powerless animosity. Mavroyeni determined to employ what little wealth and influence he still possessed in purchasing his nephew Stephan's disgrace.

Frightened at this resolution, the execution of which must render inevitable the ruin of the prince and of all his adherents, I went to him, and without much circumlocution set forth all the certain consequences of his rash design. But, soured by disappointment, the prince was become incapable of dispassionate reasoning. He was like one who, while ascending a precipice, and only looking upwards, has proceeded on with a collected mind and a firm and steady pace; but who, when again descending, sees the whole abyss before him, grows giddy, and, from the very apprehension of danger, plunges headlong into destruction. Offended at my boldness, but unable to refute my arguments, he only involved me in the ill-founded mistrust his faithful agent had incurred, and answered my arguments with abuse. "You are all villains alike," cried he, foaming with rage; "all engaged in the same plot, all leagued against my life, all watching open-mouthed for my expected spoil!"

My breath was not wasted in useless refutations of so unmerited a reproach; but I now thought myself warranted to state, that if, in defiance of common sense and of gratitude, the prince, by getting Stephan dismissed, chose wantonly to lead all his friends to the brink of the precipice, I too should think all obligation to stay with him at an end; and vowed that the day of his nephew's dismissal should be that of my own retreat. Whereupon I abruptly left him to digest the advice, and to profit by the threat.

But to no purpose. Mavroyeni, in spite of all my efforts, persisted in his infatuation; and as the favour he requested was of that sort which his worst enemies were precisely the most ready to grant, he soon obtained his wish. Stephan was dismissed, and his office given to his rival Handgerly; an event which, after all that had passed, would have fully justified my quitting the prince immediately. But I was still retained by two motives; namely, a not yet entirely worn-out attachment to my old patron, unjust as he was become; and a reluctance, after the long inactivity to which my wound had condemned me, to resign my commission the moment I again was able to do my duty.

Small, however, seemed the chance of fresh opportunities. The pacific influence which for an instant was seen to hover over the Turkish councils had winged its way northward, and had settled permanently on those of Austria. Joseph the Second, the author of the war, who, through his ill-judged mode of enforcing designs salutary in themselves, had driven to open rebellion all his dominions from the Danube to the Scheld—Joseph the Second was no more! After quenching the flame he had raised, by cancelling at one stroke on his death-bed all the toil-some reforms of his whole life, he had resigned his breath under the pressure of every public calamity and private distress which could imbitter the last moments of a man replete at once with pride and feeling; and Leopold, his brother and successor, reluctantly transferred from the peaceful banks of the Arno to all the storms that raged round the imperial throne, had already infused among the Austrian troops a spirit so different, that during the whole of the summer they contented themselves with quietly looking at the Turks across the Danube; when, unluckily, the pasha of Widdin—the ever-restless Youssoof—mistook this desire of tranquillity for a proof of weakness,

and determined with his own forces and those of Mavroyeni to dislodge the enemy from his neighbourhood. He summoned the bey to join him with his remaining troops, and the bey came at his call.

The 14th of August, by Youssoof's direction, we crossed the Danube at Widdin, and on the Austrian side of the river intrenched ourselves near the village of Kalafath, where, during several days, we continued to receive fresh supplies. Youssoof himself purposed, as soon as our intrenchments were completed, to effect his passage a little higher up the stream, so as to put the enemy between two fires. But the enemy was not quite so inactive as patiently to wait the execution of this scheme. On the night preceding the twenty-sixth of the month, the Austrians advanced unperceived; and the dawn of the next day informed us of their vicinity, by the tremendous fire they opened on our lines. We immediately returned the compliment from our own batteries, supported by the gunboats on the river, and by the fortress of Widdin on the opposite bank; and thus awhile kept the enemy at bay, until, with a view of diminishing their exposure and loss, the Austrians determined to close with us. Many hundreds were hewn down in the attempt by the troops concealed within our trenches; but the Austrian ranks being constantly replenished, while ours melted away apace, they at last succeeded in forcing our lines, almost choked up with the dead and the dying. It is true, that even after their torrent had begun to pour in with its resistless fury, Mavroyeni, who on this occasion displayed a coolness equal to his wonted bravery, again was for a moment near driving them out. He had, on the first demonstration of the enemy's design of coming to close fighting, made the division I commanded, under favour of some high ground on our right, turn the Austrians, and fall upon their rear. They imagined it to be Youssoof himself, who with all his force had passed the river, and was actually effecting his purpose; and had not at that very instant their advantage become too manifest on the side next to our lines, we must have remained masters of the field of battle.

Amid the scene of carnage which accompanied our discomfiture, dare I introduce the fate of a flesh-pot, which, humble as seems the object, yet by the vicissitudes it experienced, forms a remarkable episode in the general picture? Time out of mind this capacious utensil had been

the solace, the rallying point, the support of a most respectable oda* of janissaries. The members of this division were trailing away the ample vessel with all the celerity which its unwieldy size and little pliant form permitted; when, as it majestically retreated in all its unbending sturdiness before the advancing enemy, surrounded by its whole troop of ministers and of satellites, from the astshce-bashee or head cook of the orta down to the lowest regimental scullery-boy, and from the largest kettle to the smallest stewpan, it happened to be spied by a knot of Austrian hussars. With them, to see was to covet. Immediately they determined to effect its conquest; while the regiment which boasted its property showed equal determination to defend to the last drop of its blood what so often had sustained the life and renovated the vigour of its members. The conflict, therefore, was long and sanguinary: at one time the Austrians seemed victors, at another the Turks again recovered the highly prized utensil; and not until the unresisting victim of the fierce contest, now hauled one way, now pulled the other, had witnessed the fall of all its Moslem defenders, did it pass from the hands of the faithful into those of the infidels; but with a face as round, and sleek, and smooth as ever, unmindful of the streams of blood spilt in its behalf, and little seeming to care itself who filled its ample belly, or lit the accustomed fire under its enormous base.

Ye who value words more than things, look not with contempt upon this scene of what may pass in your minds for misapplied heroism. Learn that the very fundamental organization of the janissaries renders the vessel in which are cooked their daily rations the rallying point of each regiment; the insignia whose loss casts a lasting dishonour upon those to whom it belonged; and that, provided the common soldier has a something of which he connects the defence with his individual fame, it signifies little whether it be a copper vessel or a piece of painted silk,—an eagle or a flesh-pot.

In our defeat, my division had, in consequence of its acting independently, suffered the least. I therefore led it back round the village through which the troops retreated,

* Oda or Orta—Turkish regiment; those of the janissaries attach great importance to the preservation of the vessel in which they cook their pilau; and the officers of their kitchen possess, from the head cook down to the lowest regimental scullery-boy, their regular rank in the army.

to protect their re-embarking; but could not prevent this operation from presenting a scene of indescribable confusion. Hundreds of wretches, unable to reach the craft collected at some distance on the river, plunged headlong into the stream, and there found the death they had escaped in the intrenchments. The number of the drowned exceeded that of the slain. Several boats full of soldiers were sunk on the passage; a cannon-ball went right through the barge which conveyed the prince; and had it fallen half a second sooner, it must have ended his fate in the Danube. But Mavroyeni was not born to be drowned.

Having with a handful of Arnaoots remained the very last on the hostile side of the river, I expected to be completely cut off for want of conveyance, when at some distance I perceived a raft moored among some rushes, which thus far had escaped all observation. I pointed it out to three or four of my best men, and with them jumped upon and pushed it off. Paddling towards the Turkish shore, we soon became a conspicuous mark, and were treated accordingly. Luckily, the current quickly carried us a good way down the stream; and though many balls whizzed over our heads, none entered very deep into our bodies. The most I brought back to Turkey was a couple of flesh-wounds. Even these, it is true, I could willingly have dispensed with, in spite of the delicious odour which the Koran asserts to exhale from wounds produced by infidel weapons; particularly as the Turks show themselves too resigned to the will of Providence to bring into the suite of their armies men so hostile to the awards of fate as surgeons.

Youssoof had set his heart on his long planned *coup de main*. The failure of our preparatory movements did not prevent him from attempting it two days after; and the only use he made of our defeat was to excuse his own. The whole blame of Youssoof's discomfiture fell upon Mavroyeni, and a long list of complaints against the prince reached the Porte from the frontier, just as Handgerly had been raking up in the capital the old story of the seraff petracki, and representing Mavroyeni as possessed of all the treasure lost to the sultan by the execution of his cashier. Blows so dire, coming so fast upon each other, seemed to render the prince's ruin inevitable. Each effort he had made to recover his lost ground had only caused him to fall another step; and it appeared as if fate

had been intent only to lead him so gradually from one misfortune to another, as, without breaking his proud spirit at once, to bend it by little and little completely to the ground.

Unequivocal signs of the utmost depression showed themselves more and more every day, athwart all his unsuccessful attempts to keep up his lofty manner. The supernatural informer, with whom, in more prosperous days, he used to threaten others, he had boasted of until he himself had at last begun to believe in his existence, nay, to fear his wrath; for, from a good genius, the familiar spirit seemed by degrees to have grown into an avenging demon, who pursued his own employer by day and by night. Fixing his haggard eyes on vacancy, the prince would sometimes, as in a fit of raving, address the invisible fiend, beg a truce to his fancied persecutions, or enter into a regular defence of the conduct he had held in his government: and once, as in the middle of a numerous circle he was giving way to the transient somnolency which of late frequently overpowered his senses, and afforded a short respite from the goadings of his mind, I felt inexpressibly dismayed at seeing him—after some time moving his lips like one engaged in secret converse—at last start up convulsively from his seat, wildly open his eyes, and exclaim in a voice of thunder, “Hellish spirit, you lie! It is not I who did it:—it is not I who burnt the barn, feigned to have been full of corn: nor I who charged for the deserters, never faithful to their sovereign: nor I who buried in yon lonely garden the military chest, captured in my despatches by a troop of Hulans: nor I who poisoned the cup—”

Here my outstretched hand, laid on my patron’s lips, at last succeeded to stop the frightful current of his words. I dragged him out of the room: and his ghostly director, kept for show more than use, but not the less anxious to follow and to hear the tale concluded, on finding all chance at an end, ingeniously coloured his presence by recommending to the prince to say his prayers. The moment was ill chosen: “Cursed priest,” exclaimed the bey, “how can my words hope to rise, when you see the vampire wings flapping over my head, which beat them down again!”

The day after this scene I was sent for to the prince’s closet: he seemed then quite composed. “Selim,” said he, “my hour of fate approaches. It would be foolish to

suppose that I could much longer avert the evil day. I therefore wish you to tell me, with your accustomed candour, which you think most for my glory: to take the business into my own hands, and by a death that may seem the result of my own choice, to balk my persecutors of their expected triumph; or, with a calmness and fortitude perhaps more difficult than a precipitate suicide, to await the executioner?"

"Sir," answered I, gravely, "we all know that a king, a general, a statesman, may, without the smallest scruple, sacrifice to a mistaken piece of policy, a foolish pique, or a silly point of honour, as many unwilling victims as the object requires. In the like manner we are told that even a private gentleman may sacrifice a certain fraction of his own body—an arm, a leg, or both—provided it be to secure greater durability to the paltry parts preserved. We are even assured by grave divines, that both potentates and private gentry may make themselves defunct on earth to every social duty, by becoming monks or anchorites—and be highly praised for the deed: but however troublesome a man's existence may be to himself and to others,—however greatly his voluntary removal might oblige all the world,—however much his death would be a private and a public benefit,—none dare dispose of their sum total of life, or remove their entire being from a worse to a better world. This act, which might do the performer much good, and could injure no one else, is precisely deemed of all crimes the most heinous."

"Pshaw!" cried Mavroyeni, "I did not call you in to retail to me the commonplace cant either of Christians or Mohammedans, which latter perhaps would have added that, as the hour of death is written on our foreheads, we are not able to hasten it. I sent to consult you, as being neither the one nor the other; but a plain-spoken sensible fellow, honest enough to tell me which of the two methods I have left to choose between would figure best in history. Ancient heroes have been praised for dying without the least necessity; modern worthies for resigning themselves to live without the smallest hopes: and I cannot make up my mind which will look best in the eyes of the world!"

"To live, beyond all doubt!" cried I.—"The living every where figure better than the dead! Besides, it is the fashion of the country, which no one should despise. People will only suspect some low-born rascal, or some

low-bred disease, of having envied you the honour of the sultan's bowstring; and the witnesses of your heroism may only be hanged as the authors of your death!"

Mavroyeni still preserved a lurking love for life. Not only he resigned himself to the remnant left him; but in order to render that remnant more secure, he even determined to remove it out of Youssoof's reach.

Again was I going to accompany my patron. He had indeed forfeited all claims upon the loyalty of his adherents, by his wanton perverseness in increasing their dangers: but still it went against me to leave him in his fallen state. So far, however, from appearing thankful for this devotion, he now, to my utter astonishment, began to consider it as an importunity: "He had seen me," he said, "much distinguished by Youssoof: he knew I was his spy; and the only service I still could render a once kind and indulgent master, was to withdraw for ever from his presence!"

The opportunity which I had wished for of distinguishing myself once more ere I left the prince and the army, and of earning among men an honourable name, I had found at Kalafath. When, therefore, I found the reproaches for not departing according to my promise daily repeated by the prince, I resolved at last to go. Watching a moment of comparative serenity in Mavroyeni's temper, I entered his chamber, kissed his hand, and begged his commands for the capital.

At these words he turned pale; and looked as much aghast as if there never had been any question of my leaving him.

"Sir," said I, "did not you yourself, only yesterday, upbraid me for staying?"

"Ah," cried he, "could you then take at his word a man driven by his misfortunes out of his senses?" Then rising from his seat, and wildly pacing the room,—“My affairs must be desperate indeed,” continued he, “since it is come to this!” but again sitting down, as if ashamed of betraying so much weakness. “No!” exclaimed he, in a calmer tone, “the sultan knows all that I have done for the empire; he cannot desire my annihilation!”

I tried to confirm the boy in this more soothing idea, and fancied he had recovered some tranquillity, when again he broke out with more violence than before. “It is useless,” he cried, “any longer to conceal from you my state. A dreadful gloom oppresses my soul. Un-

ceasingly, spectres of all descriptions hover around me: they assume every most frightful shape. At this very moment one—two—three—a whole host, whisper in my ear every dire and dreadful presage!”

“And is there among them no angel of light,” cried I, “to tell your highness that by speeding to the capital, I may perhaps retrieve your fortunes? You know, sir, my ancient intimacy with young Mavrocordato; his influence with his father; the relationship of that father with Handgerly; his connexion, through his son, with the Souzzos; his riches, his sway, his ambition. Long has he aspired at the principality, and some compromise might be made by which his interest and his fortune should be employed to secure your life, on condition of your ceding to him, on the return of peace, all your claims upon Valachia.”

This expedient was but a straw: the falling prince caught at it greedily; and now pressed me himself to go in order to put the scheme into execution. After sending for me but the week before, in order to discuss the propriety of seeking death by his own hands, he now conjured me to do all I could to save his life.

Yet, when I came to bid him farewell, he hardly would permit me to depart. Laying on my hand his cold and clammy palm, “Selim, Selim,” cried he, as if oppressed with anguish, “you, who have known me from your youth; who have ever found me indulgent and kind, save when you rejected my kindness; over whom I ever kept a watchful eye, even when you thought I had justly abandoned you; henceforth, make me the only return in your power. Allow not those things to be imputed to my weakness which were only the result of my necessities. When my conduct in my principality is canvassed, recall to mind my means. What I have done, say with what I did it: and when the rest of the world shall unite to condemn me, remember your ancient patron, and dare to defend his memory.”

I felt moved, and was on the point of giving up the journey. But what good could my stay produce? I therefore gently disembarassed my hand from the bey’s almost convulsive grasp, and said,—“I was sure I still should see him triumph over all his enemies.”

“It shall be,” replied he, a little calmer, “as Heaven ordains. To myself my warning spirit whispers, my days draw to their close. Go thou and prosper.”

I went;—but prospered not!

Mavroyeni, though he immediately quitted the vicinity

of Widdin, removed not to a great distance. His first station was Arvanito-chori, a mean village; but constantly shifting his quarters from one place to another as if to elude pursuit, he still kept hovering over the borders of his principality, like the moth, which with wings already singed still flies round the candle, but at every circle narrows more and more its orbit, until it pitches on the spot marked for its final exit.

To Mavroyeni this spot was Bella. There it was that suddenly appeared before the bey, no longer a mere airy phantom, but the capidgee of flesh and blood commissioned to confer upon him the palm of martyrdom.* Mavroyeni had kept in reserve, when all other means should fail, an expedient on which he placed implicit reliance. "My firm conviction," said he to the sultan's messenger, "has always been, that a good Christian must be a bad subject; for how can he show zeal for his sovereign and his country whose religion enjoins entire detachment from this nether world? I therefore have long inwardly bowed to the truth of Islamism, and now only wish publicly to embrace its holy law, and to be numbered among the faithful."

Upon this the prince took from his bosom a small Koran which he carried on purpose, kissed it devoutly, and desired to make his profession of faith. Such a request even a capidgee durst not deny him; he was suffered to perform at his full leisure his orisons, his genuflections, and his ablutions. Only when all was concluded, the capidgee expressed his satisfaction that he now was enabled to send to heaven so sincere a believer.

What could be done? No enthusiastic mob here pressed around to take under its protection a young and pitied neophyte. Before the hoary sinner stood no one but his cold-blooded executioner, intent only upon the performance of his office. Seeing all further subterfuge therefore useless, Mavroyeni at last armed himself with resolution, and determined quietly to submit to his fate. Yet could he not, as he knelt down, help exclaiming, "I deserve not this, at least from my sovereign! May he, in his wide extended realms, find a Greek more faithful!" He said no more, uncovered his neck, suffered the fatal bowstring to be fastened round his throat,—and fell a corpse!

* The palm of martyrdom—According to the Mohammedan prejudice, the favour of the bowstring conferred by the caliph of the faithful, or his representative, ensures in the next world all the rewards of martyrdom.

CHAPTER VI.

IF my destinies never enabled me to shine forth, like the rarer suns of the creation, with any inherent splendour of my own; if my vagrant disposition never allowed me even to reflect with steadiness the borrowed lustre of a regular satellite; if at all times I rather in my desultory rambles resembled the erratic comet, either so near some nobler orb as to be lost in its blaze, or so remote from every star in the firmament as to be abandoned to its own native obscurity;—still had I thus far in my career, at least at distant intervals, shone with some little radiance derived from the reflection of loftier names; but this resource now ceases; this passport to public notice henceforth is denied me. Hassan and Mavroyeni already are no more; and if Youssoof, by concluding the war he kindled, still claims a page in history's weightier volume, he no longer comes within the compass of this desultory sketch. Nor will other luminaries arise to succeed these setting stars. Whatever instruments of great changes or workers of great mischief may still appear, will move in an orbit so distant from my reader's view as scarcely to preserve in his eyes any impressive size. Henceforth I shall constantly have to thrust my own insignificant person foremost on the stage, and to draw from my own commonplace vicissitudes alone all my means of interesting or attaching my readers.

Nor is the want of great names, in whose radiance to walk, and on whose loftiness to raise my little stature, the only growing disadvantage of these pages. The humbler person on whom henceforth exclusively devolves the task of occupying the reader's attention must even be resigned to lose, as the work advances, what little brilliancy might thus far inhere in himself, as well as the brighter light which he was enabled to cast around him by reflection. He no longer can expect to retain that power of exciting the interest or of obtaining the favour or the forgiveness of the world, which might have been hoped for in the earlier chapters of this confession. In these, the discourse was concerning a raw stripling—a youth hurried away by the restlessness of his incipient being; and the immaturity of adolescence, as it enhances

the merit of what is good, so it disposes to view with indulgence what is reprehensible. Of the faults of a boy, the greater number are ascribed to his newness in the world, to his not yet being initiated in its manifold mysteries, to his not yet distrusting its older and warier tenants. The graces of youth secure the lenience of advanced age; but that happy era, that period of delightful dreams once gone by, no more mercy must be looked for. Every action is considered as the result of a character formed, of a deliberate will. It is scanned with minuteness, and it is judged with severity. If it betray the smallest error, not only the deed is condemned, but the author is pursued by man's implacable hatred. "Of one so confirmed in evil an example is all that can be made," exclaims an unforgiving world; and where the Anastasius of sixteen might have obtained a full and unqualified pardon for his transgressions, the Anastasius of twenty-eight must expect to meet with all the rigour of unmodified justice.

If, therefore, I only wrote for others, here is the place where I would lay down my pen; but I write for myself, and I proceed. The very incidents which, more confined to my own individual self, may have less merit in the eyes of strangers, are those which my mind oftener recalls and dwells upon with most pleasure.

"The more haste, the less speed," says the proverb; and the proverb speaks true. So anxious was I on leaving Widdin to get to Stambool, that my hurry forced me to stop short in the middle of my race. Still weak on setting out, and unprovided with Mohammed's angel wings to screen me on the road from a scorching sun, I was overcome by heat and fatigue early on the journey, and fell ill at Bourgas. What I hated more than Jews do pork and gunpowder—attendants and gallipots—now again beset me. Wholly defenceless, I was assailed by half a dozen physicians and nurses at once. They took forcible possession of my apartment, and waged over my body as fierce a contest as ever did the Greeks and the Trojans over that of Patroclus. In truth, this was lucky; for my safety only lay in numbers. The sons of Æsculapius and the daughters of Hygeia neutralized each other's sinister intentions; and I escaped, like a small district wedged in between greater powers, which owes its preservation to their rivalry. In the midst of the first tranquil slumber which I had enjoyed since my malady,

I was awakened by the stray blows that fell from the hands of the two trusty persons hired to watch by my bed, as they were engaged across my pillow in a scuffle for my purse. Each tried to gloss over his own conduct by accusing the other of having come to murder me.

Fresh from witnessing events of some importance, it was during my convalescence that I first bethought myself of relieving its tedium by writing my memoirs. "They must," thought I, "if consonant to truth, speak too ill of their author, not to be sure of finding readers;" and though I did not execute my intention at the time, that idea has chiefly encouraged me to do so at the present period. I am not even certain whether (though wishing never to deviate from the most scrupulous veracity) I have not sometimes, out of respect for the public taste, made myself somewhat worse than the world gave me credit for being in my very worst days. If any of my readers should entertain a suspicion of that sort, I leave it to his own discretion to adopt or to reject it. I shall quarrel with him for neither.

When sufficiently recovered, I proceeded to the capital and visited the Fanar; but no longer, as I had intended, to make interest for Mavroyeni. His cares in this world were over ere I quitted Bourgas, and I had no other object but to afford my friends and well-wishers an opportunity of realizing the warm professions lavished upon me at my departure for Valachia. It would be unfair to say they were wholly denied or forgotten. One person whom I reminded of his promises observed, that he had pledged himself in much stronger terms than those I quoted; but to whom? To one going to join Mavroyeni in the plenitude of his power. "Now, prove yourself at this present speaking to be that man," he added, "and you shall find me stanch to my word." I applauded the frankness of this answer. There was a delicacy in not wishing to wheedle me by empty words out of an esteem which my friend was resolved not to deserve by his actions.

The filth of the Fanar now displayed to me all its lustre; it was like the contents of a sewer when, through a chink in the vault, the sun darts its beams full upon their unsightly stream; and much did the nauseous spectacle increase my veneration for the wisdom of the Turks. "Sensible, sagacious, profound people," thought I, "how much your judgment is to be admired, in simplifying, as you do, all your dealings with the Greeks! Tight as you may

fancy your grasp, still, if after catching those serpents you only allowed them an instant to turn about in your hands, they would infallibly slip through your fingers, dart back into their native slime, and elude your sharpest search. Were you to employ with that deceitful race the slow and circumspect mode of judicial proceeding which the squeamishness of Christendom thinks necessary in those matters, your indolence, your credulity, your *bonhomie*—if I may call it so—would never get the better of their artifice and subterfuges; you would never be able to follow and to lay hold of them in their endless turnings and windings; and with the moral certainty of being imposed upon by every individual of that wily nation, you must submit to be cheated out of every para of your property and out of every inch of your estates, without being able to bring a single one even of your most barefaced plunderers to justice. But, wise and judicious people! far more securely do you go to work. In your fiscal administration, you scorn those innumerable offices, and checks, and verifications, which in each empire in Christendom, for every ten individuals directly engaged in collecting the revenue, employ twenty others to watch those ten, and thus consume half the income of the state in the collecting of the other half. In the same way in your judicial proceedings, you waive those endless forms, and ministers, and tribunals; those interminable interrogatories, and scrutinies, and confrontations, which in each state in Europe busy half the population about the rights and misdemeanours of the other half, let nine offenders out of ten escape, and often only inflict on the tenth a tardy and inadequate punishment. Exercising the vengeance of the law so rapidly that sometimes you mistake the innocent for the guilty, you are always sure at least of attaining one great aim of penal justice—that of striking the mind with a salutary terror. Making an implicit submission to your most arbitrary sentences the express condition of every appointment in your state, you never fear that your agent may escape your clutches by some quirk or quibble of the law. Sure not to lose the smallest particle of your prerogatives by waiting; aware that, whatever your representative accumulates during any given period, you still in the end may claim; regarding each officer of the state only in the light of one of the smaller and more numerous reservoirs, distributed on more distant points to collect at first hand the produce of

dews, and drips, and rills, ere the collective mass be poured into the single greater central basin of the sultan's treasury, you give yourselves no trouble to check the dishonesty of your agent, or to prevent his peculations. You rather for a while connive at, and favour, and lend your own authority to his exactions, which will enable you, when afterward you squeeze him out, to combine greater profit with a more signal show of justice. In permitting a temporary defalcation from your treasury, you consider yourselves as only lending out your capital at more usurious interest. Nine long years, while your work is done for you gratuitously, you feign to sleep, and the tenth you awake from your deceitful trance; like the roused lion you look round where grazes the fattest prey, stretch your ample claw, crush your devoted victim, and make every drop of his blood so long withheld from your appetite at last flow into the capacious bowels of your insatiable *hazné*!

But the more I admired the system, as a mere indifferent spectator, the less I felt inclined to illustrate its principles by my own example. Having already with such infinite toil and danger—at the cost of my repose and my health—devoted so great a portion of that life that fleets away so fast to climbing the rugged and slippery path of distinction, in order every time I thought I had attained a certain height only again to slide back to the point from whence I first started, I determined no longer to sacrifice to the same thankless task what still might remain mine of health and of vigour. Instead of the vain sound of titles and the unsubstantial advantages of rank, I determined to seek the more lasting and more tangible prerogatives of a well filled purse, and by the laudable thirst for solid gold, to drive out of my mind the depraved appetite for mere unsubstantial fame. “The way to honours,” cried I, in my new species of enthusiasm, “is a steep and narrow path, where few can rise abreast, and those that follow only try to push down and to pass by the foremost. It is a path which can only be ascended by arduous and abrupt leaps; while at every higher step the risk of stumbling and being dashed to pieces increases in a tenfold ratio. It is a path where distances ever deceive; and what from below appeared the highest summit, when attained, only is found the base of loftier crags, bearing fruits still more empty and bitter to the taste! But the way to wealth,” exclaimed

I, "is a wide acclivity accessible to all without danger or fatigue: it is a road along which you may, to a nicety, calculate the progress made, and the chance of further progress; where success depends not on the caprice and favour of patrons, but on the exertions of the wayfarer himself; where, as his way proceeds, he rests on a wider and more solid foundation, finds greater helps still to rise on, and yet needs them less; it is a road, in fine, along which such fruits only are gathered as purchase or comprehend all the tangible blessings which man values here below!"

In this new view of things, I soon laid down my plan of future conduct. While in Valachia Mavroyeni made his harvest, I had been gleaning in his suite. Formerly, in my soberest moods, I would have hastened to get rid at least of half my ready cash, and contented myself with leaving the other half slowly to beget a puny progeny. But this suited not my present temper. Each of my thousands was in time to grow to a million; and with millions in question, the difference of one-half seemed too great to trifle with.

Now, therefore, behold Selim—the gay, the extravagant, the dissipated Selim, all at once transformed into a plodding financier; as much on the watch to turn a para, as formerly he had been on the alert for every means to spend his *purses*; carefully calculating the interest of each incoming piastre, and deeply groaning after each outgoing aspre; no longer only seeking to dispose of his capital in the way which should give the least trouble, but racking his brains to place his funds in the mode best fitted to secure that grand desideratum—that sort of philosopher's stone—perfect security, combined with exorbitant interest: no longer inquiring, when introduced to a stranger, whether he was a pleasant companion, but whether he passed for a man of substance, orderly in his affairs, and punctual in his payments; lamenting the insecurity of investments, the badness of the times, and the high price of provisions; voting servants a pest; looking with pity on the extravagant youths of the age, who preferred gold lace on their back to gold pieces in their girdle; lending them money at fifty per cent. out of pure charity; wondering how anybody could seek, in his attire and equipage, the shortlived merits of novelty and fashion, rather than the lasting recommendations of costing little and wearing well; and, strange to tell, as proud of

a cautious demure look, a smug jacket without binding, and a single half-starved waiting-boy, as ever he had been of a giddy hair-brained manner, clothes stiff with embroidery, and insolent pampered servants, more supercilious than their master.

In a cool, sedate, reflective person so entire a change of tastes and of behaviour, I suppose, could not have taken place so suddenly. It could only have been the work of time, and would have displayed a graduated progress. But I possessed not that even temperature of mind which steers clear of extremes: I never could do any thing in moderation. However different might become the object of pursuit, the ardour of the chase with me still remained the same; and the greater the impetus with which I had rushed on in any direction, the stronger, when I met with a check, became the recoil in the opposite direction. My soul fired at the recent instances I had witnessed in Mavrocordato and others, of immense fortunes made in trade; and, already in love with wealth on its own account, I doubly revered it in view of the power obtainable through its influence: for ambition would never leave me entirely quiet; but when it was turned out of doors, it stole in at the window, and mixed its persuasions with the other motives that determined me to become in spite of every obstacle a first-rate merchant. So fast galloped my imagination, that already I saw myself standing with one leg in Cashmere and with the other in St. Domingo; with the right hand loading hemp at St. Petersburg, and with the left gold and negroes on the Guinea coast; and covering with my vessels at once the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, the Euxine and the South Sea.—I had genius; I could, if I chose, force perseverance; and the only trifles wanted were capital, credit, and correspondents.

Providence had just kept in store for me the only person ready to hold all these at my disposal on the shortest notice. I found every thing needful in an old Moslem, grown enormously rich through nothing but his undeviating perseverance to do all that, by common calculation, ought to have reduced him to beggary. In the true spirit of predestination, Welid maintained that no mode of conduct so infallibly begot ill-luck as caution. "It manifested mistrust," he said, "in the ways of Providence; and one single pious ejaculation at the outset of an enterprise was worth all the calculations of

worldly wisdom." Indeed, Welid might quote his whole life in proof of this doctrine.

But, to go no farther back in the recapitulation than the instances of the last twelvemonth :—the Porte had sent away for riotous behaviour the Slavonians who do the gardenwork about Constantinople, just at that period of the spring when the setting fruits require constant irrigation. All Welid's neighbours strained every nerve to supply the deficiency, while Welid alone saw his oranges, his citrons, his pumpkins, and his pasteques droop, wholly unmoved ; and only exclaimed, " God is great !"—What was the consequence ? The sky, usually of brass in that season, all at once opened its sluices, and made Welid's *agrumi*, on the very brink of annihilation, yield a double crop.

Again: the unusual rains, in the hottest month of the year, had produced a dreadful plague. Most of Welid's friends took some precautions against the infection, while Welid alone seemed by preference to go where the malady was rifest, and only repeated, " God is great !"—What ensued ? Not a finger of Welid's ached all the time, but he became heir to every one of his relations who had evinced more prudence.

And again : the dampness of the summer was followed by an autumn so dry, that every night saw Constantinople disturbed by some dreadful conflagration. Several of Welid's acquaintance therefore watched their premises, while Welid heard the cry of *yanguen-var** in his very yard, without saying any thing but " God is great !"—How did the business end ? Welid's house indeed was burnt to the ground ; but the falling walls discovered a deposite of gold and jewels, sufficient to build a score of palaces.

What therefore could be more natural than for Welid to infer, that the more imprudences he committed, the less he could fail to prosper. Nor did he lack examples of the mischiefs arising from a more wary conduct ; for, not to mention his own brother, who, with a sincere and heart-felt wish for wealth, had, from the mere apprehension of making a bad hit, never made a good one ; nor his nephew, who, grudging a servant's wages, had, in his loneliness, been murdered by a band of robbers ; nor his cousin, who, to save his old vessel a scouring, had sold

* *Yanguen-var*—the cry of fire in the streets of Constantinople.

his gold for brass,—what but Emin's resorting to medicine, in a malady from which he might have recovered, had made him take a deadly poison? What but Talib's fear of a pursuing foe had caused him to fall into a torrent, and be drowned? And what but Nasser's inventing a most ingenious trap for thieves, had kept him confined by his leg in his own fetters, until he died of hunger amid all his dearly purchased treasure.

The vast fortune which Welid had, by his imprudence, acquired, I advised him to employ in some grand speculation, and to make me his partner in it. Others might not have thought me the fittest person for a commercial associate, but I repeated *allah-kierim** until Welid committed all his affairs to my management. We went, he, his son, and myself, to Smyrna, there freighted a vessel with cotton, and resolved to carry our merchandise to Marseilles, where we could not fail to find a good market. As I contributed but little towards the purchase, my portion was to be but small in the profits: this, however, remained a tacit clause between us, too well understood to be expressed. No regular account, no legal vouchers, no memorandum whatever, in writing, was drawn up of our respective shares. Welid was not a man to trouble himself about such formalities. "Each knew his own," he said, "and that was enough."

In one respect, however, he showed an invincible obstinacy. He had taken it into his head it would be manifesting his trust in Providence to hire the first vessel he should meet with. This happened to be precisely the oldest and craziest concern in the harbour: a thing on the eve of being broken up as unfit for service. The circumstance, however, so far from deterring, only confirmed Welid in his purpose. He thought it a most fortunate opportunity of signalizing his reliance on Heaven; and no entreaty or remonstrance could make him desist from freighting this miserable wreck in preference to a dozen stout vessels disengaged. He would not even ensure. It was flying in the face of Providence, and almost as bad as atheism or blasphemy; so that, unable to persuade my partner, I had ensurance made in my own name on the whole cargo.

We now set sail. Hardly had we got into the latitude of Chio, when Welid's son—as hale a boy to all appear-

* *Allah-kierim*—God is great! the usual exclamation of devotion, or surprise, or resignation, among the Mohammedans

ance as ever was seen—suddenly fell ill, and died. Our crew, chiefly Provençals, doubted not his being a victim to the plague, which had begun to spread in Smyrna; and they became almost petrified with terror. Welid himself, though he had appeared fond of his child while alive, shed not a tear on his death, bore his loss with his inherent apathy, and only as usual exclaimed, “God is great!” I felt so angry with him for his insensibility, that I longed to see him go to the shades after his boy!

There was nothing to hinder me from realizing that wish myself. The sailors only wondered that so infirm an old man as Welid—after having, as it were, sat open-mouthed to inhale a contagion, which had snatched away a robust youth in a twinkling—should still continue to breathe: and my putting an end to a thing so out of all rule as my partner’s escaping on this occasion his almost inevitable fate, seemed but a just return for his having exposed all our lives in a rotten vessel. Indeed, it was a proceeding which, in my situation, few of my former acquaintances would have considered as any thing more than a fair retaliation, or would have hesitated to accomplish forthwith; even though it must have entailed upon them all the encumbrance of remaining sole possessors of the cargo. Yet, unaccountable as it may seem, and scarcely justifiable in the eyes of many, I did nothing to get rid of old Welid: but suffered him to live on unmolested. It is true, that scarcely had his son breathed his last than there arose a storm, of which the very first blast shivered our frail bark to splinters. It made twelve fine young sailors and their captain go to the bottom, indeed, but spared Welid and me; and as the cargo was now lost at all events, I determined to atone for whatever evil thought might, without my leave, have risen in my breast respecting it, by doing my best to save my partner. I lugged him after me on a broken beam; and as it had not required an out of the way rough sea to make an end of our crazy ship, this fragment supported its load, until the wind and current carried us ashore on the neighbouring coast of Samos.

Welid, who had only suffered himself to be saved, like one of his bales of cotton, without making a positive resistance, experienced on this rather trying occasion so little extraordinary wear and tear of body or mind, that, weak and old as he was, he still brought ashore strength

enough to cry out with great satisfaction on the loss of his cargo, as he had done on that of his child: "God is great!" While I, on whom had fallen all the weight of exertion, could not have supported myself another minute.

Our shipwreck close to the land, in broad daylight, had collected round us a number of fishermen, all impressed with becoming gratitude towards Providence, not so much for having spared our lives as for having destroyed our vessel on their shores. Too late, however, to push our persons back into the waves from which we had just emerged, they exerted themselves the other way, in helping us on. The little money we had in our pockets was employed in getting ourselves conveyed, as soon as the storm subsided, to Koosha-dasi, on the coast of Anadoly; but this short voyage completely exhausted our finances, and on our arrival we had not a para left.

Nor were we, for the present, in want of a para. The Turk, where bigotry interferes not with his better feelings, is as charitable as he is confiding. He neither attributes good-fortune entirely to man's own sagacity, nor ill-luck solely to his imprudence; and neither is apt to listen with suspicion to the tale of the indigent, nor to cast blame on the conduct of the unfortunate. Looking upon adversity as proceeding from the same high source from whence flows prosperity—feeling as little degraded by the pressure of God's hand upon him, as elated by its support, he confers charity without pride, as he asks it without meanness. We, therefore, who came as supplicants, in need of every thing, found every thing we needed. Every inhabitant vied with the rest in supplying our necessities and providing for our comforts. Hence Welid, who wanted repose, resolved to avail himself for a few days of the hospitality so handsomely tendered; while I only requested a horse and a guide to take me on to Smyrna. The two animals soon were found, and I set off.

Our halting-place, the first night, was a mean-looking hamlet, situated in a narrow defile. The next day, after leaning a little more to the right than appeared our due course, we arrived early in the afternoon at a largish place in the plain. As we were to stop till the next morning, I established myself in a coffee-house, while Dimitracki, the guide, went to look after my horse. Scarce had I lighted my pipe and begun to sip my coffee,

when a tchawoosh, followed by two or three peasants, walked in, and summoned me before the soo-bashee.*

Where bullying seems to be the thing intended, the best way is to be the first. Many a man continues troublesome only because he has begun to be so, and knows not how to end. "I have no business with your soo-bashee," said I, therefore, to the messenger; "if he wants me, here I sit,"—and immediately I squared myself a little more than I had done before. Accordingly the tchawoosh went away, and the soo-bashee came, followed by a posse of blackguards of all colours and sizes. My own guide, Dimitracki, the greatest of all, brought up the rear, and stood peeping between the elbows of those before him.

I gave the magistrate a nod between civil and familiar. He gave me nothing in return, but gravely squatting himself down at the other end of the ragged sofa, bade my guide draw near. Dimitracki advanced, hanging his head, and afraid to meet my eyes. "So this man," cried the soo-bashee, addressing him, "is a Russian spy."

"Nothing can be more certain," answered my guide, clearing his windpipe, and trying to look resolute. "Let him but speak, and you will know him to be a Greek by his accent. He is the very man who betrayed Ockzakow to the Russians. There was Stavros, and Mavros, and Kokinos, and Proto, and Psaro, and Georgio, and Markacki, and Michaelacki, and Manolacki, and I don't know how many more of us who witnessed the whole proceeding. I know him as I do my father."

A wag here observing that that was not saying much, Dimitracki grew angry, corroborated his assertion by the most violent oaths, and called upon another Greek of the name of Petracki to vouch for his veracity.

Petracki of course confirmed all that Dimitracki had asserted: he even went further. "Indeed, your worship," cried he, "there is no end to this man's iniquities. For, besides betraying both Ockzakow and Bender, it is he—and I have it from the best authority—who assisted the enemy in intercepting, near Hissar, your worship's own boat-load of corn."

The affair of Ockzakow and Bender the soo-bashee might perhaps have overlooked as not within his province; but the corn was too much. Almost choked with pas-

* The Soo-bashee—inferior officer, commanding a village or small district.

sion, "Ah! wretch," cried he, "I could stab you with my own hands. But I respect the law: I shall, therefore, only send you bound hands and feet to Tireh; where the mootsellim, who is my friend, will be sure to see you hanged."

"No, no!" cried a parcel of fanatical Osmanlees, "we have stones enough for him here!"

I pledged myself to prove my innocence at Smyrna; but I scarce was listened to. "Any traitor," observed the party, "was sure of protection in that nest of infidelity, among the Frank consuls;" and the soo-bashee himself began to be abused for not seeing me disposed of on the spot. Either frightened or pretending to be so, he called Heaven to witness he had no hand in what might happen; and then bade me be handed over to the mob, whom he told to act as they thought proper.

So they seemed resolved to do; for all were drawing their cutlasses. A flourish was all I had left for it. Spiridion's pocketbook still kept its place in my bosom. Solemnly pulling it out, "By the dread seal of our sovereign, enclosed in this case," exclaimed I, emphatically, "I command you, slaves, to disperse. Tremble to impede my progress! For each hair of my head a life shall answer."

The audience looked aghast, the rioters slunk away, and the aga begged to provide me with a suitable escort. "I want none," I replied; "an invisible guardian watches over my safety. The wretch who brought me to this place alone shall go onward with me."

That was exactly what Dimitracki felt least inclined to do. His little scheme had been to appropriate my horse; and to obviate any opposition on my part, he had hit upon the expedient of swearing away my life. He now became so frightened that he fell upon his knees, and confessed all his untruths. "He had told them out of sheer loyalty, and in reality I ought to feel obliged to him; but all he asked for was, to go with me no farther." I protested I could not give up his company, and had him closely watched, while I condescendingly accepted a lodging for the night under the aga's roof.

At sunrise I again set off, ordering Dimitracki to take the lead. I destined him a remembrance that should benefit other travellers: but I soon found it was easier to shoot him outright than to give him a milder correction. The fellow looked as strong as a Hercules; and though

pacing on before me in gloomy silence, with his head stuck in his stomach, and his eyes cast on the ground, he seemed so constantly on the alert, that it was quite impossible to take him by surprise. Even when we halted to take a little rest, instead of lying down as he had done on the first days behind the bushes, he stationed himself with his back against a tree and his face turned to me, so that I could not move a finger without his knowledge; and though he pretended to sleep, it was only with one eye. Every time I approached him, he jumped upon his legs to ask me what I wanted.

At last we came to a pass in the mountains which looked propitious to my scheme. Here, having succeeded with some management to knock the fellow down, and to tie his hands and feet, I gave him the destined drubbing with unsparing liberality; which done, I left the too ingenious youth securely bound, to ruminate at his leisure upon the wholesome lesson. Ismir's gulf was in sight, and fortunately I wanted a guide no longer.

My first care on arriving was to recover the ensurance on the shipwrecked cargo, made wholly in my single name. After some delay, occasioned by legal inquiries, affidavits, &c., I got indemnified for every bale of cotton put on board. Welid, who in the mean time had also made his appearance, declined to share in the recovery, as he had refused to share in the ensurance. It was only by stratagem I could make him accept a small part of the produce. No way cured, however, by his loss of his blind confidence in his destiny, he continued to commit fresh imprudences, until from the condition of a wealthy merchant he became reduced to that of a poor basket-maker; but whenever we met, he still would lay aside his osier twigs to point to heaven, and cry out, "God is great!"

While following up the recovery of my ensurance, I fell in with a curious personage—a Turk, who had sought the protection of the French consulate at Smyrna. Descended from a sultana, Isaac-bey had in his boyhood been selected as playmate to the present sultan. Soon, however, his fickle disposition made him quit the seclusion of the seraglio for the command of a galley. His jovial humour and his freedom from Turkish prejudices caused him to be much courted in the different seaports by the Frank merchants; and their conversation inspired him with a wish to behold Christendom. All at once

Isaac-bey disappeared from his station, and the next news of the truant came from Naples. Some said his frisk had the sanction of his master, desirous through his old confidant to explore the arts of Europe, and to learn which of them might be transplanted with success to the Turkish dominions; nor was Isaac-bey at any pains to contradict the report. Statesmen, therefore, courted in him the favourite of his future sovereign, as the fair did the favourite of nature. The genteel Turk became the fashion in Christendom, and everybody wanted to see a Frenchified Moslemin, who ate *omelette au lard*, drank champaign, and wore a portrait of his Circassian mistress.

It was entertaining enough to hear Isaac give an account of his journey. "Unaccustomed," said he, "as I was, to the shocking sight of men and women mixing in public, or posture-making exhibited otherwise than for hire, how did I stare, when on my arrival in Christendom I was taken to a ball at the house of a bey. I thought little of the dancing. None of the females knew how to shake their hips; but their faces I liked, spite of their plastered heads. I went up to the one that led off, and watching my opportunity, slipped a purse into her hand. I thought she would have boxed my ears, and everybody turned up their eyes in astonishment, the lady being wife to the first vizier. In my own mind the impropriety rested with herself: but the adventure made me cautious how I spoke. Before the unsuccessful overture, I had secretly destined three or four of the damsels present an apartment in my harem on the channel; unfortunately, one was the daughter of the reis-effendi, the other the wife of the cazi-asker,* and the third the Spanish ambassador: so I only offered them a pinch of snuff.

"At Rome I went to see the grand mufti of the Christians, who bears the same title with our Greek papases. He appeared a very modest, well-behaved, quiet gentleman. His suite made more fuss about him than he did about himself. They dressed and undressed him a dozen times in the middle of the church, changed his caps, fed him, and sang to him. As I stood a good way from the table, which was richly decked out with gold cups and candlesticks, I took his cardinals, with their

* The Cazi-asker—title of the chief magistrate among the Turks, and, therefore, probably applied by Isaac-bey to the lord chancellor; as the appellation of reis-effendee seems to be to a secretary of state; and that of grand mufti of the Christians, to the pope.

sleek faces, their laced petticoats, and their long trains, for his wives; but was told he could not marry, though he had his troop of hoossas and medjboobs* like our own sultan: these, however, he keeps, not to guard his harem, but to sing in his chapel; and so dismally do they squall with their shrill pipes, that it is called a *miserere*. Finding Rome a very ruinous place, I was glad to leave it.

"From Italy," continued the bey, "where I saw nothing but priests and *cavalier-serventes*, I went to France, where I was pestered by *petit-mâtres* and philosophers; but they so often exchanged characters, that I never could tell which was which. Strangely was my poor Turkish brain puzzled on discovering the favourite pastime of a nation reckoned the merriest in the world. It consisted in a thing called tragedies, whose only purpose is to rend the heart with grief. Should the performance raise a single smile, the author is undone. Much, however, as I was bidden to cry, I could not help roaring out with laughter, when I saw a princess in a hoop three yards wide, stick a huge pasteboard sword in her whalebone stays, for love of a prince with his cheeks painted all over; but my bad taste excited great contempt. One day they took me to a representation of Turks, as if I had not seen real ones enough. Luckily, I did not find them out; for the fellow in the feathered nightcap I certainly would have knocked down, for daring to travestie our holy prophet. The place called the opera, with its fine show of dancing girls, pleased me the most of any. The first time, indeed, of my going there, on seeing a superb palace crumble to pieces, I thought there was an earthquake, and ran out as fast as possible, expecting the whole house to come down about my ears; but by degrees I got used to those things, no longer minded even the whole stage being on fire; and though I could never think the show before the scenes otherwise than very tiresome, often thought that behind them exceedingly pleasant.

"The French are all prodigious talkers; but those who never ceased were a sect called economists. They were for making the country produce nothing but what might be eaten; forgetting that men have eyes as well as palates; and that, if the former find nothing to feed upon, the latter will consume double quantities—were it only to kill time—and thus turn economy into waste. This I

* Hoossas and Medjboobs—names given to those who are qualified in different degrees to act as guardians of the harem.

ventured to observe; but they shrugged up their shoulders, and said I was a Turk!

"Being so near England, I had a mind to visit London. My French friends, I mean of the female sex, all opposed the idea of visiting those savage people, for no purpose but to lose all my newly acquired good-breeding. 'Life is not long enough,' said Madame de Mirian, 'to thaw the icy coldness of their first reception. They will, indeed, tell you, as they did me, that if your lungs can but stand their smoke a dozen years, you may be admitted to the honour of stirring their fire—that is to say—of finding yourself at home in their chimney corner; but, in the mean time, if you dress like themselves, you will be left to your own meditations, and if you vary from them, were it only in the width of your shoe-straps, you will be stifled with impertinent curiosity; to say nothing of their churlishness in not admitting strangers otherwise than by sea, and prohibiting all French articles!'

"These last instances of ill-breeding persuaded me; and as I had a French article of which I was very fond, I staid at Paris till the accession of my imperial master made me return home and console myself for the pleasures I quitted by the honours which awaited me.

"The first I received was an order for my exile at Lemnos; but this was not the last. My enemies accused me of having in my rambles, not only ridiculed the laws of the prophet, but committed the dignity of the sultan. So great a crime required the greatest punishment. Sitting mournfully in the boat in which I fancied myself going to the place of my banishment, my eye caught the looking-glass at the prow, and in that mirror the reflection of my conductor, seated behind me, just as he was showing the boatman how in half an hour my head would be bouncing at my feet. Judge of my situation. A French tragedy was nothing to it. At Paris I had quite got out of the habit of that sort of thing.

"Arrived at the Dardanelles, I was stowed in the dungeon of the castle, while my guardians loaded the great gun that was to announce to the world my happy exit, by the inestimable honour of the padisha's own commands. Just at that moment Seïd-aly, returned from blockading the Russians in the Black Sea, was passing full sail with his squadron through the straits. He failed not to claim the ancient privilege of the fleet to liberate a prisoner in the castle. But what was his delight to find himself by

that means, spite of every opposition, the preserver of his old friend! My sudden translation from a dark, underground dungeon filled with fierce executioners to a brilliant state-cabin skimming the waves in which each face showed a friend, had such an effect on my senses, that at first I thought the whole business a dream, and kept feeling myself all over, and especially my neck, before I could believe it a reality.

“Seïd was giving chase to the pirate Lambro. Ere he proceeded, he deposited me in this place, under the safeguard of the French flag. I have been here some time, but now no longer regret my disgrace, since it procures me the inestimable felicity of your acquaintance.”

At this extravagant compliment I burst out laughing, told Isaac-bey I was glad to see how much he had profited by his travels, and made him laugh too. We, however, became friends in earnest; and while I remained at Smyrna, scarce a day passed without our drinking together—hidden behind the tri-coloured flag newly-hoisted—a glass of muscadel to the health of the nimble-footed nymphs that adorn the Paris opera.

CHAPTER VII.

HAD my fancy for trade been a confirmed passion, Smyrna was the place to indulge in all its luxuries. In that blessed city, people's ideas run upon nothing but merchandise; their discourse only varies between the exchanges and the markets; their heads are full of figs and raisins, and their whole hearts wrapped up in cotton and broadcloths. They suppose man created for nothing but to buy and sell; and whoever makes not these occupations the sole business of his life seems to them to neglect the end of his existence. I verily believe they marry for no other purpose but to keep up the race of merchants.

No wonder, then, that I should soon decline in their good opinion; for it was now full two months since I had taken up the commercial line, and of course my enthusiasm for its charms must have been on the wane, even without the surfeit I got of them at Smyrna. My last mercantile transaction which that place witnessed was

buying of Isaac-bey a pair of pistols, made for use in England, and rendered ornamental in Turkey. They were destined for Hadjee Bollad-ogloo, chief of the mighty house of Kara-osman, lords paramount of a great part of Anadoly. I had long purposed visiting this venerable old aga (for notwithstanding his real power, his nominal rank rose no higher) at Magnesia, his residence; and now took the opportunity of my return to the capital for executing this plan.

When presented to the chief in his thriving residence, "Accept these arms," said I, "as the homage of a grateful traveller, who has found them useless amid the security which you have established in your wide domain."

Hadjee-bollad received my offering, not with the contemptuous indifference of a Constantinopolitan upstart, afraid lest the smallest symptom of admiration should be construed into an acknowledgment of inferiority, but with the courteousness of one whose ancestors had for many generations back stood high in the public estimation as well as himself. He praised the beauty of the present, and appeared anxious to make an immediate trial of its excellence. "Age," said he, "has somewhat impaired my strength; but between this sort of weapon and my hand there has subsisted so long an acquaintance, that they often still seem to understand each other almost without my participation."

He then from his very seat took aim athwart the wooden trellice of the window at a magpie chattering on the top of a cypress-tree in the court. To this bird had been given the name of Tchpan-ogloo. It was that of another great territorial proprietor in Anadoly, the rival of the house of Kara-osman in wealth, in power, and in extent of domain. He fired, exclaiming, "Fall, Tchpan-ogloo!" and brought down the bird.

"I do not know," continued he, hereupon, in great glee, "whether you think your present thrown away, but I am quite sure that the one of which I am going to beg your acceptance cannot be better bestowed." This was a handsome horse, richly caparisoned, which Hadjee Bollad desired me to keep, "in remembrance," he said, "of the patriarch of Magnesia."

Impatient to justify his compliment, I vaulted into the saddle, wrested a spear out of the hands of an attendant, and at full gallop hurled it deep into the trunk of the tree on which had sat the magpie.

"Well done!" cried the aga; "your race, I perceive, has been like my own; with this difference, that you are just starting in the career, and I am near its end. You may tell them so at Stanbool; but lest their joy at hearing it be too extravagant, tell them too that the old stock leaves a few offsets—like yourself."

I had intended to proceed on my journey the same day but without pressing me to stay, the aga seemed to have taken it so fully for granted that I could not think of going, as to deprive me of all resolution to take leave. I had not even an opportunity of representing the prolongation of my visit as a deviation from my original plan. To the aga's hospitable disposition it would have appeared like owning a nefarious design.

Seeing me in admiration of the activity and bustle which prevailed throughout his residence; of the piles of cotton, the strings of camels, the goods loading and unloading, and the guides coming and going,—"*This,*" said the aga, "*is only our peace establishment; but we are equally well equipped for war. At a day's notice we can bring into the field twenty thousand sturdy horsemen, as well mounted as armed, for the defence of the empire, or for our own.*"

"And with so much wealth," cried I, "and so much power, you have been able to avoid the sultan's dangerous honours."

"It has cost us a little," hastily rejoined Hadjee. "We have paid greater sums to keep our head out of the noose than others do to thrust theirs into it; but simple agas we came into the world, and simple agas we are determined, God granting, to go out of it. Independence, and the right of leaving our vast domain inherited from a long line of ancestors to a long line of descendants, would be ill exchanged for the empty name of vizier, with the certainty of servitude, and the probability of confiscation of the paternal estate."*

At this moment a steward advanced to inform Hadjee that a troop of Albanians, fled from the oppression of some Roumiliote pasha, were just come to crave his protection, and to beg some employment or some waste land.

"Tell them," replied the aga, "they shall have both." Then turning to me, "In granting such requests," he

* Confiscation of the paternal estate—Those who accept offices and titles from the sultan are considered as submitting to become his slaves, and giving him an arbitrary right over their lives and inheritance.

added, "the giver is the gainer." I praised him for his liberality.

"Praise me for my sense," answered he, "in having discovered that my income bears more fruit in my tenants' hands than in my own coffers. You complimented me on the security of my roads; it was obtained, not by watching my subjects, but by giving them work. When people toil in mind and in body to improve their own property, they have not leisure to covet that of others."

For three days my ears feasted on Hadjee's wisdom, and my palate on his good fare; on the fourth I took leave of my kind host. "I suppose," said he, "you only quit me to go and visit the younger branches of my family at Bergamo* and at Yayakeui." I answered that I had not time at present for so desirable a circuit; but begged permission on my return from Stamboul again to visit the chief of so noble a house. "Then do not tarry long," answered Hadjee; "I myself have a journey to perform, in which, old as I am, ten to one but I outrun you, spite of all your activity." On this we took leave; I mounted my new horse and departed.

All the way to Constantinople I could think of nothing but the novel species of existence I had witnessed at Magnesia. I felt charmed with that tranquil enjoyment of life's present sweets, undisturbed by ambitious desires as to the future, or by unavailing regrets of the past. It gave me a contempt unfelt before for long-concerted schemes, of which the labour was certain, and the success alone precarious. "Not only," cried I, "distant aims are never sure to be attained, but are not even sure when attained to afford the happiness they promise. They resemble the regions which from the mountain's summit I espy at its base. Viewed from afar, these valleys indeed appear a level plain; and it seems as if the moment I set foot within their boundaries all fatigue is to cease, and a delicious saunter over a velvet turf is to terminate my journey. But this apparently even surface—what hidden pools, and torrents, and quagmires may I not still find it to contain, a thousand times more irksome than the steep and rugged path along which I am toiling!"

As with these valleys, so it fared, I thought, with every object of human pursuit. When considered in the gross, and from that remote point of view from whence only

* Bergamo--the ancient Pergamus.

its leading features could be discerned, each alike promised a series of unalloyed enjoyments. But how different the scene when we approached within sight of the minuter details! What numberless little troubles, nameless inconveniences, and hourly cares, unthought of before, often started up when in possession, inch by inch, to devour like a gnawing worm that felicity which, viewed from a distance, seemed so entire! What diminutive insects will, by their numbers, consume the soundest fruit, ere it be ripe for gathering!

Upon this principle I now renounced all distant pursuits, and resolved only to seek the enjoyments within my immediate grasp:—forgetting that many objects, even though we should never approach them near enough to impress the sense of touch, may still by their towering splendour long at least gladden the sight or the fancy; that the pleasure, whether it actually thrill the body or only warm the mind, still, while it lasts, is pleasure, and that he manages his means of happiness but poorly, who, while his existence affords ample room both for realities and dreams, gives up, in his blind devotion to the present, all the smiling visions of the future.

Indeed, in my ardour for tangible enjoyments, I went so far as to deem unworthy of my seeking every present pleasure itself, which rose beyond those of the most grovelling description. “Who,” cried I, “would only contemplate the gilded clouds over his head, that could cull around his very feet rich fruits and fragrant flowers? Let those rest their hopes solely on the airy phantoms of the imagination who possess not the means to taste the daintier sweets of the sense: I, in whose composition flesh and blood more than balance soul and intellect, am impelled to follow a different course, and to gather all I can of the milk and honey which bountiful nature, the true Ephesian Diana, pours from the thousand springs which cover her bosom!”

Thus, in my partial calculations—in my fear of neglecting half the pleasures of existence—I was going to give up the other and better portion—the enjoyments which flourish in age, in infirmity, and in durance, as in youth, in health, and in frèedom!

How frequently does it happen, that the same external objects promote, according to the different predispositions of the mind, the most opposite sentiments and resolves! I still continued impressed with the wisdom of securing

the present, and committing the whole task of my happiness to the sense, when I began to discover Scutari, the principal outpost of the capital on the Asiatic shore; and in the neighbourhood of that city—edging the horizon—the black streak of cypress groves that mark its immense cemeteries,* the last resting-place of those who, dying in Constantinople, fear that their bones may some day be disturbed, if committed to the unhallowed ground of Europe.

A dense and motionless cloud of stagnant vapours ever shrouds these dreary realms. From afar a chilling sensation informs the traveller that he approaches their dark and dismal precincts; and as he approaches them, an icy blast, rising from their inmost bosom, rushes forth to meet his breath, suddenly strikes his chest, and seems to oppose his progress. His very horse snuffs up the deadly effluvia with signs of manifest terror, and exhaling a cold sweat, advances reluctantly over a hollow shaking ground, which loudly re-echoes his slow and fearful step. So long and so busily has time been to work to fill this spot with the sad relics of mortality—so repeatedly has Constantinople poured into this ultimate receptacle almost its whole contents, that the capital of the living, spite of its immense population, scarce counts a single inhabitant for every ten silent inmates of this city of the dead. Already do its fields of mouldering bodies, and its gardens of blooming sepulchres, in every direction stretch far away across the brow of the hills, and the hollow of the valleys: already are the avenues which cross each other on every side in this domain of death, so lengthened, that the weary stranger, from whatever point he comes, has to travel many a mile between endless rows of marshalled tombs, shaded by mournful cypresses, ere he reaches his journey's seemingly receding end; and yet every year does this common patrimony of all the heirs to decay still exhibit a rapidly increasing size, a fresh and wider line of boundary, and a new belt of young plantations, growing up between new flower-beds of graves.

As I sped through this awful repository, the ranges of sepulchres, terminating in evanescent points, rose to the

* Its immense cemeteries—Among the Turks, in proportion as death extends its conquests, cemeteries are enlarged; and as in the vicinity of great cities the tombs have cypress-trees planted round them, their distant appearance is that of a forest. The burying-places which surround Constantinople on all sides are immense; but chiefly those at Scutari; from the predilection which even the Turks of Europe preserve for being buried in Asia.

right and the left on my passage—only for an instant to strike my sight, and then again to disappear and to make room for new ones—in such rapid and yet such unceasing succession, that at last I fancied some spell possessed my soul, some fascination kept locked my senses; and I hurried on with accelerated rapidity, as if the end of these melancholy abodes was to be the end of my waking delusion. Nor was it until near the verge of the funereal forest through which I had been pacing for a full hour, the brighter light of a gayer landscape again gleamed athwart the ghostlike trees, that I stopped to look round, and to take a more leisurely survey of the ground I had traversed.

“There,” said I to myself, “lie, scarce one foot beneath the surface of a soil, swelling, and ready on every point to burst with its festering contents, more than half the generations whom death has continued for near four centuries to mow down in the capital of the Turkish empire. There lie, side by side, on the same level, in cells the size of their bodies, and only distinguished by a marble turban somewhat longer or deeper—somewhat rounder or squarer—personages in life far as heaven and earth asunder, in birth, in station, in gifts of nature, and in long laboured acquirements. There lie, sunk alike in their last sleep—alike food for the loathsome worm—the conqueror who filled the universe with his name, and the peasant scarce known in his own hamlet; Sultan Mahmoud, and Sultan Mahmoud’s perhaps more deserving horse;* elders bending under the weight of years, and infants of a single hour; men with intellects of angels, and men with understandings inferior to those of brutes; the beauty of Georgia, and the black of Sennaar; viziers, beggars, heroes, and women. There, perhaps, mingle their insensible dust, the corrupt judge and the innocent he condemned, the murdered man and his murderer, the adulteress and her injured husband, the master and his meanest slave. There vile insects consume the hand of the artist, the brain of the philosopher, the eye which sparkled with celestial fire, and the lip from which flowed irresistible eloquence! All the soil pressed by me for the last two hours once was animated like myself; all the mould which now clings to my feet, once formed limbs and features like my own! Like myself, all this black

* Sultan Mahmoud’s horse—actually interred in the cemetery of Scutari, under a dome supported by eight pillars.

unseemly dust once thought, and willed, and moved!— And I, creature of clay like those here buried; I, who travel through life as I do on this road, with the remains of past generations strewed around me; I, who, whether my journey last a few hours more or less, must still, like those here deposited, in a short time rejoin the silent tenants of some cluster of tombs, be stretched out by the side of some already sleeping corpse, and be left to rest, for the remainder of time, with all my hopes and fears—all my faculties and prospects—on a cold couch of clammy earth:—shall I leave the rose to blush along my path unheeded, the purple grape to wither over my head? and in the idle pursuit of some dream of distant grandeur that may delude me while I live, spurn all the delights which invite my embrace?—Far from my thoughts be such folly! Whatever tempts, let me take; whatever bears the name of enjoyment, henceforth let me, while I can, make my own!”

It was thus that scenes at which might have sickened even stouter hearts than mine, did but send me forth confirmed in the schemes of sensual gratification with which I had entered their awful precincts.

On my arrival at Constantinople I proceeded to execute my sage intentions without loss of time. So constantly did I keep the fear of death before my eyes, that I suffered none of the pleasures of life to escape me, nor the least unseasonable reflection to break in upon my wiser employment of my hours. I wanted no attendant to remind me daily that I was mortal; but, wholly unadmonished, lived each day as if it was to be my last.

While scudding full sail down the stream of pleasure, a sudden side-puff of the most extravagant ambition I ever yet had conceived blew across the current, and drove me for a time wholly from my forward course. It was occasioned by a report, true or false, but sedulously spread at Pera, of the state of complete anarchy into which had fallen the autocratical boudoir of all the Russias, by the dismissal, or discomfiture, or death of some reigning favourite. Two or three youngsters, it was added, gifted only with overweening presumption, had attempted to succeed him, but had died of mere fright previous to their installation. In this situation of affairs it struck me that I might have a chance, and need only be seen, to charin and win the prize.

It seemed worth while trying, every way. In the first place, a Greek of talent was always sure of promotion in the Russian service. It is true, I had been in that of the Turks: but that circumstance only rendered my posture the more promising. Friends, after all, were friends; while enemies must be won over. It is true, moreover, that there was a great disparity between the lady's age and mine; but I knew that if I could get over the objection, she would; and in order not to let it arrest me, determined only to see in every furrow of her face the fold of a well-filled purse, and in every spot or freckle on her skin, the insignia of some brilliant order. Once, therefore, a smart tight-laced colonel in Catherine's own Bréobraïskî body-guard, who doubted the rest? Not Anastasius for certain! "Chill of age nor of climate," cried I, "shall stop me; I shall grasp at all, become another Potemkin, rule an empire, have a court, alternate between arranging fêtes and planning campaigns; pay my card-money in diamonds, make mosaic-work of provinces, plant orange and citron groves on hanging terraces of icicles, and, when tired of illuminations on the Neva, set on fire the Bosphorus—and transport the seat of empire from the vicinity of the White Sea to the shores of the Black Sea!"

I had already put myself into regular training; and for the purpose of stimulating my ardour by the daily contemplation of the great Ekatharina's charms, had actually, Mohammedan as I was, bought a plaster bust of her majesty, in more respects than one, as I was told, greatly resembling the original; when a little Greek baggage of Pera stepped in between, and audaciously seized upon the destined minister of the autocratrix of all the Russias.

The place where by preference I sat ruminating upon my project was my bow-window; and this bow-window happened to face a gaze-boo on the opposite side of the way, where usually sat, in the same manner musing on her projects, a fair Greek widow, who, it seems, was not reserving herself for any northern potentate whatsoever. Somehow the fascinating Katello contrived, without the least intention, to show me through the trellice-work of her shah-nishin,* almost every item of her various attractions (and she possessed a good many) in regular suc-

* Shah-Nishin—name given to the projecting windows or gazebos in use at Constantinople.

cession. First was beheld—by mere chance—a bright eye, very dark, full of fire, and not at all the worse for wear, notwithstanding all the service it had seen. It incautiously showed itself while in the innocent act of watching the state of the weather, and the aspect of the clouds. Next peeped out—lest I should think there was but one—its companion to the left, very much resembling the other in most particulars, and which went forth into the street very much upon the same guileless errand. In adjusting these said eyes to the small openings left by the laths, came in view, somewhat lower than themselves, the tip of a little nose very prettily turned. Presently some acquaintance of the lady's on my side of the street—but whom I never could descry—gave cause for certain signs in dumb show, chiefly performed by a pair of pouting lips of the true vermilion hue; and these signs were accompanied by certain looks, whose lightning glanced so close by me, as actually almost to singe off the end of my left mustachio. Nor did the reluctant display of attractions end here. Ever and anon the settling of the perverse blinds required the ministry of a certain number of rosy fingers most gracefully tapered; but these ill-trained attendants set about their task with such provoking awkwardness, that for the most part two round white arms were obliged in their turn to venture out as auxiliaries, for the purpose of reinstating what the hands had undone. In fine, one day, more than usual efforts to put to rights an entangled window-curtain caused such dreadful confusion, that through the double care of adjusting the drapery overhead, without deranging that situated lower, neither object was attained, and at last the upholstery of the room came down on that of its fair tenant. Civility now no longer permitted me to remain an inactive spectator of my neighbour's embarrassments. I ran down to my door and up to the opposite window, and tried to extricate the adorable widow from her manifold difficulties. Until that instant I had only had sight of her person in detached samples; and what I now saw in the piece did not belie their promise. It seemed to defy criticism throughout. I, who could worship the cloven foot itself, *bien chaussé*, was fascinated with the one I beheld, and, like another Mark Antony, gave up for love the empire of the world!

For the sake of hastening my possession, and securing the lady a decent retreat, in case I should prove incon-

stant, we agreed upon one of those short-hand marriages, called by the Turks cabeen. Deeming this a scarcely reputable mode of union, the fair widow made me promise inviolable secrecy, and insisted on my abusing her in public, in order to cloak my good reception in private. At first I objected, and found my gallantry check my attempts at detraction; but by degrees I gave into the scheme more readily. In fact, from some defect, whether in my charmer or in myself, I began to think, after a certain time, I might contrive to find a fault here and there without doing great violence to truth. Some of her beauties seemed really much diminished in my eyes, and others wholly vanished. Her eyebrows had lost their evenness, and her lips their colour: her very eyes, I thought, had shrunk in their sockets: and though her mouth was become proportionably larger, this scarce made amends. What I had before viewed as a beauty spot, I now saw as a huge mole, and a certain easy languor of gait, had grown into a positive lameness. The lady affirmed herself to be equally out in her calculations with respect to me. When, therefore, I boasted of my zeal in following her instructions, and, in particular, of the unfavourable description I had given of her ankles, so far from seeming pleased with the account, she fell into a violent rage, and cried, "It was her conduct, not her person, she had bidden me abuse!"

I thought this a good opportunity for proposing to the *light of my eyes* to pay the forfeit money, and to rescind the bargain: but at the bare suggestion my tender spouse fell into hysterics; and when I pulled out my purse to settle accounts, swore she never would take her money. She however took mine, and carried away the whole bag, of which the half only was her due: but it was in the distraction of her grief, and only showed the excess of her love! With bitter sobs she bade a hamal remove her trunk, buried her paramana under her bandboxes, hung her shawls and trinkets about her own person, and giving me a parting nod, stepped across the street, and resumed her old seat in her own shah-nishin.

Scarcely had I been single a fortnight, when the more devout among my Mohammedan friends represented to me very seriously that celibacy was a continual transgression of the law, and that every man as well as woman of a religious turn of mind made it a point to live constantly in the marriage-state. Merely to get rid of their

importunities, I deputed two Armenian ladies of my acquaintance on a journey of investigation; but so favourable was the report they made of a young Halebeen* just brought by her parents to Constantinople, that I feared I should have nothing to object to the union. The fair one was not fifteen yet, and already weighed near an hundred okkas! I however pleaded my unwillingness to give credit to such an exuberance of charms without ocular evidence. This favour was refused me, as I expected, prior to the wedding, and did not seem extraordinary enough, after that ceremony, to fix my resolution. The preliminaries were thus broken off, and my friends entreated to trouble me no more.

Hard is the labour of having no employment! Heavy the infliction of being obliged constantly to seek amusement! Night and day I toiled at this task with the utmost perseverance: night and day I strove to get rid of the burthen of idleness; and, in the absence of real wants, to conjure up imaginary necessities, that might rouse my activity, and afford it the requisite food. But none of my contrivances struck at the root of the evil, and ennui always sprung up afresh. Often, in the midst of a life of entire gayety, I regretted those times of toil and danger, when I used one day to have my dinner and the next to go without it, one night to lay down under a hedge and the next to remain like a stork upon my legs, and, always on the alert, alternately to smoke a pipe and to despatch an enemy.

In the midst of this surfeit of ease, a letter came most opportunely from Smyrna to give a new impulse to my thoughts and wishes. It was written by a distant relation settled at Trieste, who, having employed his whole life in accumulating a considerable fortune, was now beginning to consider how to prevent its waste after his death. Grown old and infirm, he wished for some younger branch of the family stock, willing to bear him company during the remainder of his days, on condition of becoming his heir on his decease. Cassis Pharaon, formerly collector of the customs at Cairo, but lately fled with all his treasure to the emperor's dominions, had mentioned me as likely to acquit myself well in both offices; and my cousin, called to Smyrna on business, felt anxious to see me, and to sound my disposition.

* Halebeen—from Haleb or Aleppo.

His invitation held out such flattering hopes, that I could not resist it, but again set out for the place of figs and raisins; determined to outdo them in sweetness, in my intercourse with my well-intentioned relation.

Before I could reach Broossa the night had come on. Its obscurity just allowed me to perceive, creeping among the tombs, a something which bore a suspicious look, and at first left me doubtful whether I should honour it with my notice, or continue my way. Curiosity at last got the better of discretion. I followed the vision; bidding it, whether man, demon, or jackal, to stop and to answer. But as I advanced it silently retreated, and with so much speed that I must have lost the scent but for a grave-stone, over which it had the ill luck to stumble. It now, to my great amazement, divided in two. One part remained motionless where it had fallen, the other kept running on; and both, as it proved, with equal reason for their different behaviour—the stationary half being nothing but a sack full of dead men's bones, the moving one the living thief who had stolen them in the cemetery. Again I cried to this personage to stop, or I should shoot him: and he now faced about; but fell upon his knees in the shape of a caloyer, who, to move me to compassion, related his story. Sub-deacon to one of the monasteries on the Agios-oros, he was with his archimandrite on an eleemosynary tour, and happening at the last place of halting to examine their stock of relics, the worthy pair had found it run so low as to require replenishing. The nearest burying-ground offered the readiest means: and the contents of the bag were nothing more than a few straggling bones of Turks, picked up in the said repository, to compose a fresh assortment of Christian relics.

On hearing this account, "Wretch," cried I, "who thus come to despoil our graves! What should prevent me from making a relic of yourself?"

"Only the circumstance," humbly replied the caloyer, "that it would not be worth the while—at least in the way of punishment. My halcyon days are over. The route marked out in our credentials draws to a close; and in less than a fortnight we must perforce return to our convent, to fast and pray, and see nothing in a human form worth looking on, for the remainder of our lives!"

"Then to kill you would be a mercy!" said I, and let

the fellow go. I myself hastened to a khan in the town, where, jumbling together in my brain the caloyer's bag of bones, and what my friend Eugenius once had told me of the periodic renovation of whatever has life, and the successive appropriation of the same organic particles by different bodies, I dreamed I heard the last trumpet calling up the dead, but beheld them sadly puzzled how to obey the summons; half the souls thus roused being each individually assailed by at least a dozen different bodies of different ages, which all with equal earnestness asserted themselves to be their own; while the other half were still more at a loss from finding no bodies at all with which to rise; theirs having been occupied since the death of their first tenants by a whole series of later generations.

My hurry to get to Smyrna was much too great to go round by Magnesia, and pay Kara-osman another visit, as I had promised. Far from making an unnecessary circuit, I pushed on the shortest way to my destination: but I needed not have used so much diligence. On my arrival I found my loving cousin gone! He had returned to Trieste, and without so much as leaving a note or message to account for the abrupt proceeding. This was rather mortifying, and made me look very foolish. I stormed, and raved, and blustered: I considered whether I should not go after my perfidious relation, and call him out in single combat; but at last, recollecting that the disclosure of one slight provokes others, I determined to look highly pleased; swore I only returned to Smyrna for the benefit of the climate, and to make good my assertion resolved to stay the winter, and to spend all my money, that I might seem very happy!

CHAPTER VIII.

I AM NOW come to that period of my life, when, in most individuals the more youthful passions at least have exhaled their greatest fire, and have become more tractable: but there are constitutions by which, either from their natural weakness, or from the exuberance of certain of the noxious principles mixed up in every human com-

pound, the virus of peculiar maladies cannot be wholly thrown off in the first conflict, however decisive it appear. In these, after all the danger is considered as past, and all the poison as exhaled, there often comes on a relapse, which ends in death; just as every heart rent by agonizing fears had begun to re-expand at the prospect of a speedy recovery.

And such a constitution was that of my ill-poised mind! At the very period when I felt peculiar exultation at having successfully borne some severe trials of my steadiness, and manfully resisted some temptations of a very perilous nature; when I considered myself as henceforth safe from the sway at least of those more commonplace passions, whose tyranny while it lasts is the direst, and renders its slaves the most abject; as if I had only been collecting fresh materials for a last breaking out of the latent fire within me, more destructive than any former, a flame kindled in my bosom which shook my being—body and soul—unto its very basis; and influencing the whole remainder of my life, has left its sequel an almost unmingled scene of sorrow and compunction.

Yet did the events commence in gayety which had so fatal a termination!

In the course of my former mercantile transactions at Smyrna, I had made in that city a few sober acquaintances, whom I used occasionally to visit. The men with whom I habitually lived were a more jovial set:—amphibious beings, found in all seaports, who consider the land only as a place of passage, regard the sea as their proper element, and feel equally at home wherever its waves waft their restless existence; who, like the pebbles on the beach, which the tide alternately covers and leaves exposed, lose, through constant friction, all their original distinctions of shade, present one uniform similarity of rude, indiscriminate polish, and with a very complete assortment of the vices of every different region which they in turns frequent, seem to belong to no one race, or country, or religion, in particular.

In order to exclude irrevocably from their society all such individuals as might feel the smallest natural tendency to a sober and sedate deportment, these giddy sons of joy had most sedulously drawn up a long set of regulations, which every candidate proposed was held to subscribe ere he could be admitted. Such, however, was my anxiety to become one of the props of this noble

institution, that I did not even take time to inquire what were its laws, but put my hand and seal to them blindfold.

It required but a little time to learn, that the first rule—that which admitted of no exception—was, that by which every associate was prohibited from marrying, or from taking—in the language of the place—a female partner for his own direct account, and at his own risk and peril. He who was weak enough to become a principal in a connubial firm, and undertook to carry on a matrimonial partnership under his own name and responsibility, was immediately struck off our list. Our refined band would even expatiate on the exceeding indelicacy of the marriage contract, by which the possession of a fair one was, in a true mercantile spirit, purchased by a definite jointure. “What, indeed, was it, but assimilating the most disinterested female to the venal syren who openly professed to let out her endearments for hire; and who could deny, that all the life of love must evaporate where no difficulty preceded, no mystery enveloped, no danger accompanied a tender intercourse! In order to ensure these indispensable requisites of perfect bliss, and through their means to possess the unquestionable assurance of their mistresses’ unbounded devotion to them, our fastidious youths scarcely permitted themselves to pursue a prize that could yield without setting at naught for their sake every consideration of fear, shame, and pride; but fettered by these severe restrictions on the latitude of their choice, they all joined in sincerely pitying the number of poor females smitten by their charms, to whom they could not extend the solace of their attentions.

It may reasonably be supposed that I could not brook to be outdone by any of my new companions in feats of gallantry; and merely for the support of my character, I was in the act of engaging to find favour in a given time with whatever beauty might be considered as the most inaccessible in Smyrna, when, in the very midst of my boasting I received the following note.

“You are a man of enterprise; you part with your money freely; you complain, I am told, of too much facility; but is not the game you pursue ignoble? you visit the house of Chrysopulo, and yet you overlook Euphrosyné!”

I made no doubt that this note had been indited by

some of the party present, perhaps by the whole set, in council assembled. It seemed a sort of public defiance, a gauntlet thrown by all, which I must take up or lose my reputation with my fellow-rakes. I therefore read the epistle aloud, and pledged myself to gain the prize pointed out, or to forfeit the place I held in the society. Every head shook in doubt of my success, or rather every lip curled up in derision of my presumption. Flushed with wine, I felt my foolish pride alarmed, and offered to stake large and unequal sums all round the circle on what I imagined to be a certain conquest. They were eagerly accepted: I found myself engaged ere I scarcely knew to what; and when I looked round I had the satisfaction to see all my friends chuckle inwardly, as if already in possession of my money.

The subject of the fatal wager was a young lady related to a wealthy Greek merchant, with whose wife she lived as a companion. Euphrosyné passed for a great beauty, and had recently been betrothed, it was said, to the son of another Greek merchant, likewise very opulent. Money, therefore, which on all other occasions I had found a useful weapon of attack, was in this instance turned against me, and converted into a powerful means of defence.

I used, indeed, as stated in the insidious note, sometimes to call upon the family of which the fair Euphrosyné formed so great an ornament. Its experienced chief had assisted me in some of my mercantile purchases; but these meetings on mere business Euphrosyné's beauties were never allowed to illumine with their radiance. The destined husband himself could scarce ever get sight of his intended spouse. The moment that even his licensed footsteps were heard to approach, the older females of the family used to conjure the nymph away, or at least to form round her person a fence so impenetrable, as to set at defiance her swain's hottest fire of sighs and glances. What wonder, therefore, that a stranger and a Mohammedan, whose visits were necessarily rare, and whose appearance put to flight every member of the gynæceum unprotected by the ægis of age or ugliness, should never have beheld this paragon of perfection, or known aught of her charms but from common report!

This circumstance, however, no longer had power to influence my conduct. Such was the dilemma into which my thoughtlessness had betrayed me, that, even were

Euphrosyné to offer to my eyes no charms whatsoever. I still must obtain her, or submit to ruin—ruin of a reputation in truth sufficiently despicable, and ruin of a fortune which I thought by no means deserving of that epithet.

Upon the whole, therefore, I rather wished not to behold my destined victim sooner than was absolutely necessary for the execution of my nefarious purpose ; lest a countenance so heavenly as hers was said to be should disarm my villany of the coolness requisite to crown its attempts. All that I wanted in the first instance was to gain some intelligence among the inferior inhabitants of the fortress menaced, fitted to second from within such operations against it as I might judge most expedient to carry on from without.

On this subject I began intensely to meditate the moment the long protracted revels of the night permitted me to go home and lay down my weary limbs ; and on this same subject I still continued meditating with equal intensity, as, after the late and lazy rising of the next morning, I trailed my torpid limbs to the door, in order to inhale, with fresh air, fresh ideas and fresh spirits.

Alas ! Cupid, fond of mischief, saw what was passing in my mind. In the midst of my uncertainty he sent tripping by my threshold, as if going on her morning errands, one of the female attendants of the very family selected by our society to writhe under the pangs of unmerited dishonour ; and one of no less consequence than Euphrosyné's own waiting-woman ; the very person whom, in my unprincipled eagerness, I could have implored my stars to throw in my way. The waiting woman's face, I do not know why, seemed familiar to me ; and equally familiar to her appeared to be my own features : for, on catching my eye, she courtesied so graciously as almost to assure me by her mere manner of an unlimited devotion to my most unbounded wishes.

It would have been positively churlish towards the smiling nymph, as well as neglectful of my own interest, to let so fair an opportunity slip through my fingers. After some requisite ceremonial on my part, and a decent demur on hers, I induced the diligent Sophia to enter my abode ; and there !—but of what consequence is it that I should detail by what arguments she was won over to my purpose ? Suffice it to state, that on disclosing my situation and wishes, so poorly acted was the indis-

pensable preliminary abhorrence of my proposal, as almost to make me conceive from the facility of the waiting-woman, a prejudice against the fair fame of the mistress herself. A well-filled purse given on the spot as an earnest, and a considerable sum of money pledged as a more substantial final reward on the completion of the business, sufficed very soon to obtain a promise of unrestricted co-operation in all my designs. It was only when so ready a compliance elicited the loud thanks it deserved, that the lady made some faint attempt at disclaiming a title to my somewhat distressing gratitude. "Had Euphrosyné been suspected of harbouring the smallest spark of affection for her future consort," she now thought it incumbent upon her to state, "not all the treasures in the universe would have obtained from her so much as a mere patient listening to my scheme; but the contrary being notorious, she in fact favoured my suit as much from anxiety for her mistress's happiness, as from compassion for my sufferings." This first intelligence, however, so kindly vouchsafed me of a circumstance so well known to all, was of no avail in saving the suivante's modesty from fresh blushes. I only praised her considerate motives the more, in doing for the sake of her mistress what I had only supposed her to have undertaken for mine. Nor was the information of a nature to lessen the satisfaction I felt at the result of the rencontre. It rendered my design at once less heinous in the conception, and less difficult to execute. To erase old impressions ere new ones are substituted is an arduous task, and of doubtful success; but on a blank sheet of paper, what penman, even of the most ordinary abilities, flourishes not away as he pleases?

Fully as Sophia understood the object to the achievement of which she had kindly pledged her good offices, to be independent of any very violent feelings of love on my part, she nevertheless could not help observing how much it might be forwarded by some such sort of sentiment on the part of Euphrosyné: and after sagaciously adding, that nothing was so essential to falling in love with people as seeing them, she proposed to submit me for the approval of her mistress in a walk with a large party of friends, planned for the next day in the fields outside the city. "It is absolutely necessary," cried she, "that you should be there by accident. Take no notice of us, but only give us an opportunity of noticing you.

Mine shall be the care to improve the incident. A turn or two will suffice ; then away again, on your life ! and wait patiently till the next morning disclose to you what conversation may have taken place at bedtime."

The hint was not lost upon one so eager as Anastasius to embrace whatever could gratify his vanity. With more than usual attention, therefore, to my toilet, I began the next day. I attired myself, not richly—for on some occasions I felt jealous of my own dress, and fearful lest my finery should eclipse my person—but as becomingly as possible. No insignificant gewgaws were permitted to conceal the athletic structure of my frame, and the graceful knitting of my limbs. A mere tuft of jessamine, white as my own teeth, was made to relieve the brown polish of my skin, and the jetty black of my beard ; and art and nature were, throughout my whole appearance, blended in such just proportions, as every where to contrast with and to relieve each other.

Thus attired for conquest, I sallied forth on a solitary ramble, and sought the verdant meadows with as much eagerness as does the fiery courser, when, liberated after long confinement from his gloomy stable, he rejoins in the fields with loud neighings the rest of the prancing stud.

Not long had I reached the happy valley when the youthful troop appeared, and by long peals of laughter proclaimed its deceitful security from danger. I first kept myself concealed at a distance ; let the giggling girls begin their sports ; and only, when from my ambush I saw them fairly entrapped in a small and secluded nook, of which I commanded the entrance, did I, like one attracted by the noise, leisurely step forward, to petrify the gay band by my sudden appearance. Every gambol immediately ceased ; and long before I could come up with the outermost detachment, was every scarf and shawl at its office to conceal its fair owner under a treble envelope. The change from the brightest sunshine to a sky all clouded over, is less rapid even in the inconstant month of March. I therefore only once walked round the party, more to be seen than to see, and having cast a single furtive look on its soaring leader, or rather on the ample veils which completely dimmed her lustre, I immediately retired with the air of one who begs pardon for an unintentional intrusion, which he dares not exult in, but cannot regret.

It may be supposed, that athwart all Euphrosyné's jealous fences of silk and wool and cotton, rendered doubly impenetrable by every addition of fringe and trimmings and tassels, not one single feature of her face had been revealed to my searching eye; and even her figure had been but indistinctly discerned: but what of that? Such is the force of imagination, that I felt as if I had been permitted to dwell unto satiety on all I could have wished to see. I went away completely smitten with her air, her grace, her bounding step, her playful manner. What I had not been permitted to behold I moulded after my own taste; and all the rest of the day, and all the ensuing night, I kept my fancy busied with the beautiful image, chiefly of my own creation.

Early the next morning walked in my friend Sophia. Her practice was not to waste time in forms. I eagerly inquired what symptoms my appearance had produced in Chrysopulo's fair charge. "Draw your own conclusions," said the waiting-woman, "I shall simply relate facts."

"As soon as at bedtime with Euphrosyné's bodice her nimble tongue was let loose, and the nightly hour arrived for reviewing the occurrences of the day, you came on the *tapis*;—for to have left unnoticed so remarkable an incident as that which interrupted the morning sports, would have been the most suspicious circumstance of any. 'You know the person by whom we were thus surprised,' said I, significantly.

"'No,' replied Euphrosyné; and wondered I should be able to remove her ignorance.

"'That is no fault of mine,' rejoined I, 'when our good or evil stars have made him a friend of your cousin's, and a visiter at our house. Had I, however, conceived the possibility of our meeting so dangerous a youth in so secluded a spot, we should have directed our walk elsewhere. They say it is impossible to behold this Moslem, and to refrain from loving him.'

"'Nonsense!' cried Euphrosyné, with a forced laugh and an involuntary sigh.

"'Nonsense it probably is,' resumed I, in a careless manner—'though I might, if I pleased, add what certainly is not.'

"'How?' cried Chrysopulo's cousin precipitately;—but immediately again checking herself, 'No,' added she, 'do not tell me; it is no business of mine!'

“‘Indeed, I would not tell you, even though you should entreat me,’ replied I, ‘unless you made me a solemn promise that I never should have cause to regret my too ready frankness.’”

“Euphrosyné now began to apprehend that the silence she had exacted might look like want of confidence in her own steadiness. ‘I make the promise you required,’ said she, ‘but merely lest you should fancy I fear any danger from your indiscretion.’”

“I then told the blushing girl that you had seen her, and suffered for her all the pangs of unrequited love. Emboldened by the silence with which this disclosure was received, I even went so far as to enlarge on your merits; but soon I found that agitation alone stopped the trembling maiden’s breath. My comment gave her time to recover. Having, however, suffered me to begin the encomium unimpeded, she allowed me to conclude my speech unchecked, in order that her not cutting it short from the first might seem done with design. It was only when I no longer knew what to say, and hemmed as for an answer, that I was asked, with an affected composure, to what all this was to lead?”

“I felt disconcerted, and Euphrosyné, after waiting a few seconds, desired I might not trouble myself to seek a reply: ‘She must,’ she said, ‘inform her relations of my improper conversation.’ I could only make her desist from this intention by recalling her promise.”

“No matter,” cried I, already fully satisfied with what I had heard; “it is plain the dart has penetrated! all, therefore, we have to consider—”

Here a tremendous noise shook the door of my lodging. It announced the riotous entrance of all my bosom friends. I only had time to thrust Sophia into my back room, and went out to meet the jolly party. So loud were the inquiries from all quarters respecting the progress of my love-affair, that, terrified lest Sophia should hear them, and feel deterred from her perilous purpose, I tried to entice the troop away by running down stairs the first. The whole procession immediately followed; to my great relief, under my conduct, again sallied forth into the street, and proposed to take a turn on the quay, in which expedition—disposed or not—I was forced to join: it however gave Sophia an opportunity of slipping away unperceived.

During the remainder of the morning I could think of

nothing but Euphrosyné. From not feeling any desire to behold my charmer's features, I now was unable, from what I already had seen and heard, to rest until I had obtained of them a full and unrestrained view. The day happened to be a Greek festival. In the evening, by calling at Chrysopulo's, and entering his habitation unannounced, I was sure to find the whole family collected. I determined to risk the adventure.

The peals of merriment which resounded through the house both guided my footsteps and drowned the noise of my approach. Unperceived, I stepped into the very place of entertainment. Euphrosyné, seated in her costliest attire at the farther end of the hall, had just begun to recount—half in speech, half in still more expressive pantomime—a playful story. Every eye and ear, riveted on her performance, was turned away from the door, and I advanced a considerable way into the room before my visit was perceived. When, indeed, my presence became noticed, such was the sensation it created, that a kite could scarce have made a greater, alighting among the timid tenants of the poultry-yard. All the females set up a warning shout, rushed forward, threw a veil over Euphrosyné's still unconscious face, and formed round her person an impenetrable fence. The merry tale with which the thoughtless girl was entertaining the company immediately ceased; the magician she was in the act of killing with her bodkin, remained alive to do his mischief, and in the confusion which pervaded the assembly, her own form, as if conjured away by witchcraft, rapidly vanished from my prying sight!

But it was too late: I had seen and I had heard! One single glance of her languishing black eyes had, from between her silken eyelashes, unrecalled, met my look, and like liquid fire penetrated to my heart; while, at the same time, one last expiring note of her soft melodious voice had from her ambrosial lip gently dropped upon my ear, and there continued to vibrate like the lyre's last dying strain! At once I felt every string of my weak brain wound up to madness.

All the powers of language, of course, were inadequate to express the pleasure diffused among the Greek party by my unexpected visit. While the only object I came for was most studiously kept out of sight, I was with the utmost assiduity made welcome to every thing else in the house: was introduced to every individual I did not care

to know, and was offered every dainty I did not wish to taste. Fascinated, and fixed in that same spot which had so lately felt the pressure of Euphrosyné's lovely limbs, I seemed half to enjoy her presence, and did not retire until wished by every person present where indeed of my own accord I was going fast enough.

Having with faltering step reached my house, I there yielded myself up, body and soul, to my newly conceived delirium. Only after I had sat musing until my lamp burnt dim, did I retire to my lonely couch. I then undressed and went to bed—but went not to repose. Instead of blood, unquenchable flames seemed to circulate through my veins: and racked with love, which was become hopeless in proportion as it had become ardent, I tossed about all night, trying to grasp my fair one's unsubstantial image. At last, exhausted by my fruitless efforts to give body and colour to the delusive phantom, all power of thought forsook me, and I sunk into a state, not of sleep, but of half-conscious, half-insensible torpor.

I rose with the lark, though not as blithe; and counted the slowly passing hours until Sophia was to come. I panted for the appearance of this new depositary of my thoughts and schemes, no longer as before merely to settle my plan of operations, but to talk of, to expatiate upon, to rave about Euphrosyné!

In vain I waited and waited; and at every footstep in the street, and at every rap at the door, and at every noise on the stairs, flew out to meet my Iris. The faithless messenger came not at the time appointed; she came not after; she came not at all! Nor did note or message come in her stead to account for her non-appearance.

I would have gone, if I durst, to the house blessed by my angel's residence. I did all I could: I walked all day long in sight of its froward door. I watched all that went in, and all that went out. I kept myself in readiness, the moment Sophia appeared, to pounce like a hawk upon the dilatory suivante; but no Sophia did appear!

Meanwhile, every possible mode of ingratiating myself with the heavenly Euphrosyné passed through my, alas, less heavenly mind. According as she might be more or less sensible of the charms of gold, or accessible to the lures of vanity, or charitable, or devout, the mere glitter of St. Mark's dazzling images,* or the means of relieving

* St. Mark's dazzling images—Venetian sequins, stamped with the figure of that saint, and the most current gold coin in the Levant

the wants of the necessitous, or the pride of seeing the haughty Selim prostrate at her feet, or the wish to save his falling soul from perdition, might be tried, I thought, as bribes to win her affections: but which of these motives for listening to my suit assimilated most with her character, and what were the virtues or the faults in her disposition, which might be rendered propitious to my views, remained to me a secret; for while the sun continued to light up this hemisphere (and in wonder at my behaviour he certainly more than once forgot to move), I saw not my traitress of a waiting-woman darken the door with her shadow.

At dusk, however, and just as I was returning home entirely hopeless, the well-known form brushed by me. I followed it to a retired spot, where, precipitately turning round, as if afraid to waste time,—“What have you done!” exclaimed the agitated *souvante*; “why would you show yourself in the only place from which you should have staid away?”

“Only,” answered I, “to see the lady I was making love to.”

“And so,” rejoined Sophia, “to lose her for ever, as now you inevitably must: for your abrupt visit last night has had the effect of producing all that you could have wished to prevent. The period of the nuptials, uncertain before, is now fixed for to-morrow!”

A short struggle in my breast kept my answer during a few seconds suspended on my lips: at last, with one concluding but victorious effort, “Sophia,” replied I, “my resolution is fixed! While I knew not *Euphrosyné*, while I yet felt no preference for that angel of heaven, come to render earth worth staying on, I could regard her ruin as my sport: but I have beheld the lovely girl, and have fallen into my own thrice-accursed snare. Her innocent looks have melted the hardness of my heart. I no longer can bear, like the *simoom*, to blast the lovely flower. I am now ready to perform any sacrifice for her permanent possession—for a possession that may make me happy, without making her miserable. I shall attach her to my fate through the holy ties of wedlock. It is but paying a few suns which I deserve to lose, and feeding afterward upon love alone!”

Sophia here set up a hellish laugh. As soon as the burst was over, “And so you think,” cried she, “that all is to be settled to your liking by this magnanimous reso-

lution; that you have nothing more to do but to announce your pleasure, and take away your bride! Allow me to undeceive you—Euphrosyné's relations are rich, they are proud, and they are bigoted. Under no circumstances whatever would they suffer a kinswoman of theirs to marry a Mohammedan. No! not if the sultan himself were come in person to demand her. Then judge whether you have a chance; and that with the faith of the whole family pledged to a wealthy young Greek, ready to tie the nuptial knot! Believe me, if you should ever wish Hymen ultimately to crown your flame, you must begin by rendering your success independent of his assistance."

"Sophia," resumed I, "once more I tell you that my resolution is fixed. Adoring Euphrosyné as I do, nothing shall induce me to rob her existence of its bloom, her life of its lasting pride. For once I shall subdue my lawless passions; I shall pay the forfeit of my idle boastings. If, after making sacrifices to her virtue and her peace so weighty as those of all fortune's valued gifts, and all love's unfettered raptures, she accept me for her husband, well and good. Luxuries she will not find, but affection in abundance. If, on the contrary, she reject me: patience! For once in my life I shall have done what was right, at the expense of my vanity, my fortune, and my happiness."

Sophia at these words turned pale. She seemed to labour with a fearful secret; but seeing me determined,—
"Man," cried she at last, "let not woman deceive you any longer. Fear not to despoil what has ceased to exist. I hitherto have felt loath to disclose the dark mystery, but rather than that I should suffer you to become the sport of an arrogant family, and the subject of a solemn mockery, I shall reveal to you all—all that hitherto remains a secret from a prying world. Then, learn, that you no longer are in time to make on too tender a heart the first unlawful impression! Hot kisses have already pressed her lips, for whom you resign yourself to an unavailing martyrdom. The plant still flourishes green and gay; but other hands have culled the blossom."

Here Sophia put her mouth to my ear. I felt as if a snake crept into its folds, and deep sunk into my heart the venom of her frightful story. "As, however," added my confidant, after her tale had worked its way, "the unlucky occurrence has hitherto been successfully hushed up, they are in the greater hurry to conclude a match on

all accounts so desirable, ere it be divulged or suspected."

"And this," exclaimed I, "is the conclusion of all my love! and innocence and purity then exist not on earth! Even where one would wish to worship them as things sacred, they elude one's keenest search; and woman's licentiousness outstrips the thoughts of man! Oh that a bud so fair, so young, should already contain the foul worm of corruption in its bosom! that another should already have rioted unrestrained in what with such painful struggles Anastasius himself was going to give up from sheer virtue!" And in my wrath I resolved no longer to sacrifice both pleasure and fortune to the shadow of an undeserved reputation. I resolved to resume my before abandoned scheme, no longer from love but from sheer resentment; at the same time binding Sophia by all that was most awful never to divulge the odious secret, lest by its publication I should be prevented from reaping my golden harvest, as I had already been in gathering one far dearer and more valued.

When, however—the first ebullition over—I reconsidered the matter, the thought struck me that Sophia had only disclosed her mistress's secret shame from a fiend-like greediness, and in order not to lose the promised reward; and carrying this reflection somewhat further, I now conceived it possible that a motive so powerful in her breast might have made her invent what she pretended to divulge. Hereupon all my waverings returned, and at last—determined to remain on the right side—I reverted to my prior resolution of giving up the pursuit: nay, from fear of fresh relapses, when I saw my informer preparing with a sanctified air to call the whole host of heaven as witnesses to her veracity, I stopped both my ears, and bravely ran away. The moment my astonished informer found her endeavours unavailing to bring me back, her oaths methought changed to curses; but these died away on the distant breeze.

Half pleased, half angry with myself for my forbearance, I walked about the town, shunning my friends, to whom I had nothing to impart but what must gladden them at my expense, and seriously considering whether, both for the sake of their morals and my purse, I should not, by a sudden evolution, quit them and Smyrna for ever; when, in the midst of my meditations, a messenger—of those that ply about the streets in search of commis-

sions—struck me on the breast with a small bunch of flowers.

Skilled in the meaning of these mute heralds of love, I snatched the nosegay out of the rude hands by which it seemed profaned; but when I came to consider its arrangement, I found that all I had to learn had not been left to the vague language of the pink and gillyflower: their fragrant leaves concealed a note, and this note contained a lock of hair and a ring.

Eagerly I perused the billet. It began with reproaches: but they were of a nature to be endured with composure: “not less painful to a lady was the task of making the last advances than the first; and were not the morrow the day when what had not been might never more be, no consideration would have induced the writer to inform me that a narrow passage only separated from the chamber of the married couple the closet where slept their young cousin; that this closet looked out upon a garden; and that this garden was only divided from the street by a low wall. Sometimes,”—added a wary postscript, “careless servants would leave shutters unbolted: but always a sober family was in bed by twelve!”

Euphrosyné’s handwriting I was a stranger to: and this note probably had only been penned by deputy, though couched in better terms than those generally used by servants; but in how far the professions of the maid had the sanction of the mistress, it was easy to try, and by an unerring test; and the difference between two thousand sequins to pay, or that sum to receive, made it well worth the while. Nor was there any time to be lost. The very next day—as the note itself suggested—would be too late for the experiment. Should I find the passage barred, it was but returning as I went. Why, however, suspect Sophia of risking a falsehood, which, as such, could not command success, must soon be discovered, and must end in her disgrace? For as to the idea of her scheming to betray me to Chrysopulo, though it had entered my brain, I held it not worthy of a moment’s thought. I therefore determined to obey the welcome summons.

Ten minutes before the hour appointed, my pistols were loaded, and my person lightened of all useless encumbrance. Wrapped up in my capote, I sallied forth, found all things disposed according to promise, easily scaled the wall, had only to push open the blinds, and leaped into the chamber of love, where, half covered only by a light Bar-

bary haïck,* Euphrosyné lay apparently unconscious of aught but the dreams that flitted through her youthful fancy. So sweet indeed seemed her slumbers, that, but for every convincing circumstance, they might have been mistaken for those of innocence, and once more made me hesitate for a moment ere I threw off my cloak, deposited my pistols, and extinguished the lamp.

If at first the real or pretended sleep of my mistress somewhat surprised me; if that surprise grew greater at its long continuance; what was my astonishment when Euphrosyné at last only awoke to start from my embrace, and to utter loud screams, which the pressure of my hand was hardly able to stifle.

Her outcry had been heard ere it could be stopped. Chrysopulo himself had quitted his consort's side, and with the carbine which he always kept loaded, had run to whence proceeded the sound. With one effort he burst open the door of the closet.

Already I was standing near its threshold bolt upright, with my capote on, and my pistol pointed. In the dark, the merchant mistook me for a robber: he fired his piece, and missed.

I now put mine to his breast. "All I wish," cried I, "is to make you listen. If you value your cousin's honour, favour my escape, and pretend that you were dreaming."

Chrysopulo, thus enlightened, now trembled with rage. His eyes glistened amid surrounding darkness like those of a maddened tiger. Yet, uncertain how to act, he remained motionless where he stood, while Euphrosyné, mute with shame and despair, was only heard striving to suppress her bitter sobs.

Meanwhile, the report of the musket had roused the whole family. Chrysopulo's wife was crying "murder" in her bed, the servants starting up from their first sleep, and the people that passed by in the street knocking at the door until the house shook to its very foundations. Each instant the noise increased, and the uproar came nearer. Another minute, and the immediate scene of action must witness a general irruption.

Chrysopulo now became sensible of the wisdom of my suggestion: rousing himself from his trance, and pointing to the window, "Away, away!" he cried, but cried

* A light Barbary haïck—or cotton cloak, worn by the Barbaresques.

too late. Already a number of voices in the garden sent forth a confused murmur from the very spot where I must have alighted. Chrysopulo looked whether I might slip under his cousin's couch—it was too low; or upon the wardrobe opposite—it was too high.

Aghast, we now stared at each other, until in his perplexity, the trembling banker—for want of a better expedient—pushed me down in a corner and there—tearing from off Euphrosyné's own couch the counterpane, her only covering, threw it over the much injured girl's prostrate ravisher.

Just at this moment rushed in the whole posse. A thousand questions succeeded each other without intermission, and, all circumstances considered, the story which Chrysopulo made out in answer was sufficiently plausible. Euphrosyné's terror and confusion, with the other apparent objects of the scene, might, without any great stretch of probability, be attributed to her cousin's mistake; and the whole terminated to the satisfaction or rather dissatisfaction of the curious, who, fully expecting a long list of dreadful murders, were seemingly somewhat wroth at being put off with a bad dream, and went away wishing the rich Chrysopulo worse suppers or a better digestion.

Meantime, seeing so many people rush by her door, Chrysopulo's wife herself had mustered courage to follow the crowd. Being the last to come, she was the last to depart; or rather, she had a mind not to go away at all, and insisted on staying, in order to tranquillize her cousin's agitation. She mistrusted her husband's dream, and wanted to sift his conduct to the bottom: wherefore, unable to confide in her discretion, the alarmed Chrysopulo at once resolved to conquer her resistance by force. He took her by the arm, dragged her out of the room, and, lest she should return to listen, locked her up in her own chamber.

If, fearless myself, I had only reluctantly acted the coward for the sake of others, and had more than once felt tempted, while the mob remained assembled, to start up, to show myself, and to carry away as a trophy of my victory the instrument of my concealment, I now, when the coast was clear, and the way open for my own retreat, felt equally desirous of staying, and that, with views similar to those of Chrysopulo's wife—namely, to obtain an explanation of a few circumstances not quite

intelligible even to the framer of the plot himself: but for an inquiry of this sort neither the time nor place were fitted; and fresh noises at the door made me run, without further delay, to the still open window. I thence leaped into the garden, overset or trampled down every flower and vegetable in my way, and, after climbing the wall, got safe into the street, and back to my lonely lodging. There I lay down, and began to reflect on the inconstancy of women who send flattering invitations and then scream out on finding them attended to—until at last all my bewildered thoughts were hushed in sleep. The next morning, on awaking in my own bed, with every object around me as orderly and tranquil as the day before, it seemed as if, during the whole of the eventful night, I never had quitted my solitary pillow!

The first circumstance which afforded me distinct evidence of having trespassed on premises not my own was Chrysopulo suddenly standing before me, as, still undressed, I lay musing on my couch. Determined to brazen out what could not be denied, I thanked him for the honour of his early inquiries, and begged he would be seated. He took little notice of these insolent civilities, but immediately coming to the point, "You have offered my hitherto unsullied house," said he, "the cruellest of injuries! How far you have succeeded, I neither know nor can bear to inquire. Should your baseness have been disappointed, the fault is not yours: yet, much as I am bound to abhor you, I must stoop to a request."

"Speak," said I, "a petition so agreeably introduced can scarcely meet with a refusal."

"Your crime," answered Chrysopulo, "is thus far only known to ourselves, and to whatever vile abettor of your wickedness may reside under our roof. Even Euphrosyné's intended husband presumes not to cast upon his future consort the smallest shadow of blame, or wishes to defer the long-concerted nuptials. Humbly, therefore, let me entreat, that out of compassion for the object—the unfortunate object of your lawless violence—you will not carry your cruelty any further, or be so devoid of mercy as to boast of your base attempts. Divulge not the foul stain which you destined our house! Thus may we still hold up our heads among our envious countrymen, and the unhappy Euphrosyné still preserve both her husband and her honour!"

Moved by an entreaty so earnest and so discreet, I wholly forgot that I had only conceived the crime for the very purpose of that boasting which Chrysopulo deprecated, felt as anxious as himself to prevent the consequences of my outrage, and said all I could to quiet his fears. Greatly relieved by my assurances, the merchant almost thanked me for my goodness, and returned home with a mind more at ease.

But as soon as he was gone, it recurred to me that the engagement I had taken must defeat even my purpose of mere emolument: nay, that unless I published my victory, I must not only renounce what I had won, but pay what I had not lost: an irksome sacrifice to make for one who, like Euphrosyné, when I first saw her, no longer herself had any virtue left to lose. Yet could I not, consistent with my promise, speak, even when the object of my silence was fully attained.

Deeply regretting my precipitance, and loudly cursing my good nature, I paced up and down my room, half-dressed, and expecting every moment to see Sophia come and claim her vile, her now bootless reward: until, tired at last of waiting, and attributing her delay to the bustle of the day, I proceeded to achieve my often interrupted toilet. Once, indeed, a slight temptation came across me to honour the wedding with my presence: but I still had some grace left, and contented myself with awaiting at home, in the utmost anxiety, the news of the nuptials being completed.

CHAPTER IX.

I HAD scarcely finished my dressing, when a distant clamour in the street drew me to the window, and made me espy a veiled female, whose uncertain gait and faltering steps had attracted the notice of a troop of foolish boys, and made them follow her with loud hootings. It was impossible not to set down in my mind one so carefully wrapped up and so desirous not to be known, as the partner of my guilt, coming to demand the wages of her iniquity; and all that baffled my utmost power of conjecture was, the change from Sophia's wonted boldness

of demeanour, to such apparent timidity and helplessness, as that which she seemed to manifest on this occasion. I could only attribute the phenomenon to the discovery of her nefarious conduct, and to her consequent dismissal from Chrysopulo's family with every circumstance of reprobation and disgrace; on which account I immediately sallied forth to my ally's assistance. My surprise still increased, when, tendering the bewildered suivante a protecting arm, I first saw her hesitate, then shuddering withdraw the hand which already I held firmly grasped in mine, and at last only suffer herself to be dragged into my habitation, after the terror produced by the insults of the gathering mob had, as it were, entirely deprived her of consciousness; but my astonishment only rose to its highest pitch when, tearing off the cumbrous veils in order to give the fainting maiden some air, I beheld, instead of the daring Sophia, the gentle, the reserved Euphrosyné herself, who scarcely, on recovering her senses, had opened her eyes and cast them around her, when, again sinking down to the ground, she struck her face against the floor, and began wringing her hands with every symptom of the bitterest anguish.

The cause of her having quitted her home I was at a loss to conjecture, but the effect it had of bringing her to mine, I hailed at first as a highly fortunate circumstance. Thus would my triumph be blazoned forth without my word being broken. When, however, I witnessed the excess of my fair one's grief, contrasted as it was with my own joy, I too felt moved, tried to assuage her sorrow by every expression of pity and concern, and as soon as she seemed able to speak, ventured to inquire what had caused her coming forth, thus unattended and forlorn, at the very time when I supposed all Smyrna collected to witness her nuptials.

"My nuptials," cried she, with a bitter accent—now first suffering her voice to strike my ear—"when my dishonour is the universal theme!"

"The universal theme!" re-echoed I—in my turn truly dismayed. "Then may heaven's direst curse alight upon her who has divulged it!"

"That was myself," replied Euphrosyné, "and your curse has struck home!"

I remained mute with surprise.

"Could I," rejoined my mistress, "to dishonour add deceit? Could I bring a dower of infamy to the man, so

noble, so generous, that even after my frightful tale he spurned me not away from him: to the man who deigned in pity to affirm that my avowal of my involuntary shame rendered me worthier in his eyes, and gave him a stronger assurance of my fidelity, than if I had come to his arms as spotless in body as in mind?"

"And who," added I, "after this sublime speech, ended by rejecting you?"

"Ah no!" cried Euphrosyné; "it was I who rejected him; it was I who refused to carry reproach into the house of a stranger; and who for that crime was threatened by my own friends with being cast off, and thrown upon the wide world, helpless and unprotected!—But," added she, covering her face with her hands, and sobbing more bitterly than before, "I suffered not the threat to grow into a reality; I waited not to be turned out of doors. I resolved at once upon the only step which was left me; I asked permission to go to our church, in order that, in my fervent prayers, Heaven might inspire me how to act: and, when alone and in the street, tried to find out your abode, and to seek refuge where alone I had claims."

"What then!" exclaimed I, "you set out from home determined to come to me?—and it was not the shouts of the mob only—? I fancied I saw you shudder when I seized hold of your hand!"

"And could I execute such a resolve, and not shudder at the thoughts of the consequences?"

These now began to flash upon my own mind also in all their fearful varieties. At first, indeed, the surprise on beholding Euphrosyné thus unexpectedly, the consciousness of my own iniquities, the exultation at seeing its triumph sealed without the smallest violation of my promise, and the sympathy excited by my mistress's evident sufferings, together with a thousand other mixed and indescribable sensations, had induced a momentary forgetfulness of all those reports against Euphrosyné's character, which had encouraged me to prosecute my plan, had made that plan receive its fulfilment, and had in their turn been confirmed by my very success. But on hearing not only of an act so uncalled for as Euphrosyné's spontaneous disclosure of her shame, so wanton as her refusal of her still urging suitor, and so strange as her deliberately leaving her husband for her despoiler, the truth—dimmed for a moment—seemed again to burst

upon me, and with double conviction. I now conceived that even my crime might only be the pretence, rather than the real reason, of Euphrosyné's renouncing an advantageous match. Her former dishonour again rising to my mind, lent even her present conduct the colouring of artifice; and, if I thought it hard upon me that an assignation proposed by my mistress herself, and that as not only the first, but also the last I could hope for, should end in her inflicting upon me the burthen of her permanent support, I thought it harder still to be thus heavily visited in consequence of the sins of others. That shelter, therefore, which I had gladly granted Euphrosyné under my roof while I only considered it as accidental and transient, I began to grudge her when I found it the beginning only of a sojourn which was to have no end; and I resolved to ward off its permanence with all my might.

To give my real reasons for so doing was impossible. On reviewing every past circumstance, I felt that, from the first wording of the assignation to the close of the interview, matters had been so conducted as to leave me, with every presumption, not one positive proof of Euphrosyné's having willingly shared in my stolen pleasures. No argument against complying with my visiter's petition, founded on that circumstance only, would consequently be admitted: and as to the report of her prior guilt, even my own vanity shrunk from suffering an imputation so odious to lessen the merit of my victory, or the value of my prize: besides, I beheld pangs too acute still to increase them by a reproach, which must inflict equal agony, whether founded or not. Appearing, therefore, to speak more from tenderness for my mistress than for myself, "Euphrosyné," said I, "it was unwise, methinks, to divulge what, but for your own spontaneous avowal, might have remained an inscrutable secret; it was a thousand times more unwise still, when you found that by an unexampled privilege this deterred not your suitor, yourself to refuse him; but it seems to me the very height of folly willingly to court every form of disgrace where, as it appears, you still may enjoy every species of distinction. You cannot justify your conduct in casting, without necessity, such a stain upon your family. Hasten then to repair the mischief while you still are in time; return home immediately, as if you had only offered up a hurried prayer in church, and obviate by your ready

acceptance of Mackari, all the impending consequences of your thoughtless and precipitate step!"

Alas! I addressed one who, wholly bewildered by her own feelings, heeded not a single word I spoke. Euphrosyné, fixing upon me an eye at once vacant and supplicating, continued to preserve an unbroken and, as I thought, stubborn silence, until at last I deemed it necessary to use terms more decisive and peremptory. Taking two or three hasty strides across the room, as if still to increase the ferment of my already heated blood,—“Euphrosyné,” cried I, “it is impossible you can stay with me. I myself am a wanderer on the face of the globe: to-day here, to-morrow, perhaps, flying to the earth’s farthest extremity. Your remaining under my uncertain roof can only end in total ruin to us both. I must insist upon your quitting my abode, ere your own be no longer accessible to your tardy repentance.”

“Ah, no!” now cried Euphrosyné, convulsively clasping my knees; “be not so barbarous! Shut not your own door against her against whom you have barred every other once friendly door. Do not deny her whom you have dishonoured the only asylum she has left. If I cannot be your wife let me be your slave, your drudge. No service, however mean, shall I recoil from when you command. At least before you I shall not have to blush. In your eyes I shall not be what I must seem in those of others. I shall not from you incur the contempt I must expect from my former companions; and my diligence to execute the lowest offices you may require will ensure me, not wholly unearned at your hands, that bread which elsewhere I can only receive as an unmerited indulgence. Since I did a few days please your eye, I may still please it a few days longer: perhaps a few days longer I may therefore still wish to live; and when that last blessing, your love, has gone by—when my cheek, faded with grief, has lost the last attraction that could arrest your favour—then speak; then tell me so, that, burthening you no longer, I may withdraw—and die!”

Spite of the tears with which I answered this speech, the conviction that all might still by diligence be hushed up, was going to make me urge more strenuously than before Euphrosyné’s immediate return—when a new incident took place, which wholly changed my inclinations and my feelings.

This was no less than a sudden and forcible irruption

in my abode of the maiden's relations. It had soon been discovered by them, that, instead of going to church she had come to my house; and her friends had hereupon walked forth in a body to claim the stray lamb, and to bring her back. Chrysopulo himself, indeed, was not of the party: it only consisted of half a dozen of his nephews and cousins: but this posse uncereimoniously enough broke in upon me just as I was urging my mistress by every motive in heaven and on earth not to delay her departure another minute; and immediately proceeded to effect by force what I was only trying to obtain by persuasion.

My readers already know how little I liked being interfered with, and how apt I was to act in opposition to those around me from no other motive but to assert my independence or to show my daring: they will not, therefore, be much surprised to hear that this incident caused an entire and sudden revolution in my sentiments with regard to Euphrosyné, and that, from wishing her to go while she expressed a wish to stay, I now would have detained her by force, even if she had wished to go. Taking hold of her, therefore, by one arm, while Chrysopulo's friends were pulling her away by the other, I swore that nothing short of death should make me give up the maiden who had sought shelter under my wing; and as Euphrosyné herself, when appealed to, seemed to sanction my proceedings by drawing her veil over her blushing features, her friends were at last persuaded, by the threatening gestures with which I accompanied my assurances, to give up all further attempts at violent measures.

In truth, they rejoiced in their hearts at having it to say that an insurmountable resistance had baffled all their efforts. Euphrosyné had early been left an orphan; her nearest of kin were all dead; and though the more distant relations to whose lot it fell to protect her would have upheld their fair cousin most sedulously while they had any chance of deriving an additional lustre from her establishment in life, they were willing enough to drop the connexion as soon as her situation was likely to reflect discredit on their name. However loud and boisterous, therefore, might be the wish they expressed of restoring her to her family, there lurked not the less satisfaction at the bottom, when they found her resolved not to go; and while they pretended to feel exceedingly

hurt at her refusal, they took her at her word with the utmost alacrity; or rather suffered her mere silence to stand for a denial. Piously lifting up their eyes to heaven, and groaning from the inmost of their hollow hearts, they turned away from one whom they saw so irreclaimably abandoned, and hurried out of the house, lest she should change her mind ere they were out of hearing. When, however, they found themselves safe, as they thought, in the street, they stopped to announce, for the benefit of all who passed by, their determination to renounce so unworthy a namesake. Thenceforth they were to regard her as among the departed, and, happen what might, never more to inquire after her fate; and, to their credit be it spoken, they adhered in that instance most religiously to their word.

My undisturbed possession of Chrysopulo's fair cousin, therefore, was now a matter settled; and the lofty, the admired Euphrosyné, who that very morning might still have beheld all Smyrna at her feet, saw herself before midday installed in the lodging of a roving adventurer, as his avowed and public mistress!

Of Sophia the lovely girl could give no account. While Chrysopulo continued in hopes of seeing the affair hushed up, he abstained from rousing the anger of this fiend by expressing his suspicions: but the moment Euphrosyné herself had made public her adventure, Sophia, no longer feeling safe in the family, had disappeared: nor had she since been heard of;—but her fate was the least of my cares.

The foremost, at present, was the payment of the sums I had won. The addition to my establishment permitted me not to be unmindful of my interests. As soon, therefore, as I had said and done whatever seemed most calculated to dispel Euphrosyné's settled gloom, I immediately walked to the meeting-place of our society, and found its members in council assembled.

My first salutation was a demand upon each: but, to my unutterable dismay, the first answer was a loud and universal burst of laughter at my presumption! As soon as this peal of merriment subsided a little, I was told that I might think myself well off in having nothing to pay instead of to receive; and, on demanding a further explanation, I learned that the infernal Sophia had been beforehand with me, and the instant she left the house of Chrysopulo, had gone round to all my companions, in the

first place, indeed, to inform them of my success with Euphrosyné; but, in the next, to comfort them with the assurance that it had only been the consequence of those prior adventures of the same sort which my confidant had sworn to me never to divulge. Every person present, therefore, immediately called out, "a drawn wager!" and I was voted entitled to not one single para!

What could I do with a bad cause, and a parcel of fellows each to the full as sturdy as myself? Only this: to renounce with a good grace what I clearly saw I never should obtain, and to join in the laugh at my own impudence; of which, I observed, it was worth while at any rate to try the powers.

But tolerably as I had contrived to preserve my good-humour with my strapping companions within, the case became different when on going out again to return to Euphrosyné, I met Sophia coming, as I guessed, to receive the reward of the mischief she had done me, or to do me some further injury.

Great as was my pecuniary disappointment, it seemed nothing to the wound inflicted on my pride, in the infamy heaped upon her whose fate was now connected with my own by links more indissoluble even than those of matrimony, inasmuch as I had deprived a lovely female of the power of being restored, even by a divorce, to her former home. The insulting epithets still rung in my ear by which Euphrosyné had just been designated; and these opprobrious names were the work of Sophia!

So conscious, indeed, was this wicked girl of her iniquity, that, far from seeming to harbour any thoughts of enforcing her still unsettled claims, the moment she saw me she tried to make her escape—but it was too late!

"Wretch!" cried I, "thus then you have performed your promise. Now behold in what way I perform mine!" And hereupon I seized her by the wrist, and loading her in the midst of the gaping crowd with every epithet more disgraceful, if possible, than those which she had drawn down upon my mistress, I shook her until she almost fainted, and then left her to recover her senses in the black filth of Smyrna's kennel! Thanks to this immersion, she tarried not to revive; and no sooner did the fury think herself safe from my wrath, than, setting up a hellish laugh, "Wipe clean your Euphrosyné," cried she, "ere you bespatter others with your dirt!" and then

walked off with threatening gestures—alternately wishing me joy of my prize, and auguring me every misfortune under heaven. Heated as I was with passion, her curses made my blood run cold, and in return I would have chilled for ever the noisome tide in her own viper veins—but with a home-thrust of my dagger; had I not been prevented by the mob from annihilating the reptile!

But its venomous bite left a print in my heart which no power could efface! To fail in all my schemes both of profit and of pride; to be burthened with the whole weight of my mistress's existence, while bereft of all esteem for her character; to feel myself the victim of the deceit or the sport of the caprice of one whose tenderness had been prostituted to others—and, more than that, to find the shame which I had hoped to bury in the inmost recesses of my own bosom divulged to all the world; to be pointed at with derision by those very companions over whom I had made sure to triumph, was beyond what I had strength of mind to bear—at least to bear alone; and the embers of affection for my new inmate, still glowing in my breast when I last left my home, seemed all extinguished by what took place ere I re-entered my abode. If, however, I only returned to it with the determination of making my hapless guest a partaker in all the sufferings which she had drawn down upon my head, it was also with the full intent to keep the cause of my behaviour locked for ever within my own swelling heart! Why, indeed, dwell without necessity upon the painful thoughts of an infamy, of which I was unable to bring the proof, and despaired of extorting the confession!

Under her former playfulness of manner Euphrosyné, it seems, had always concealed great decision of character. She had shrunk from going home to a husband or from staying with friends whose reproach she must fear, or whose forbearance endure. To me, on whom my outrage had given her the claims forfeited in every other quarter, she had come for refuge, as to the only person whose abode still owed her protection; but she had come oppressed with the sense of her dishonour; she had come so heart-struck with anguish, that had the innate fertility of her imagination still made it put forth, amid all the disgrace of her situation, the smallest bud of sprightliness or fancy, she would have thought it a duty to repress or to crush these intellectual blossoms as

noisome weeds, whose rank luxuriance ill became the sadness of her soul. Nothing but the most unremitting tenderness on my part could in some degree have revived her drooping spirits.

But when, after my excursion, I reappeared before her eyes, one look—one single look she cast upon me as I entered the room, sufficed to inform her of the change in my sentiments—and that look for ever destroyed in her breast the last seeds of hope and of confidence! Like the wounded snail, she shrunk within herself, and from that moment never more expanded to the sunshine of joy. With her buoyancy of spirits she seemed even to lose all her quickness of intellect, nay, all her readiness of speech; so that, fearing to embark in serious conversation, and finding no response in her mind to lighter topics, I at last began to nauseate her seeming torpor, and to roam abroad even more frequently than before I had secured a companion at home; while she—poor, miserable creature—prevented from stirring out by the sneers of an unfeeling world, passed her time under my roof in dismal and heart-breaking solitude.

It is true, that had an almost indefatigable endurance of my ill usage been able to soothe the pangs of my disappointment, Euphrosyné's angelic sweetness must at last have softened my stubborn heart: but in my jaundiced eye her resignation only tended to strengthen the conviction of her shame; and I saw in her forbearance nothing but the consequence of her debasement, and the consciousness of her guilt! "Did her heart," thought I, "bear witness to a purity on which I dared the first to cast a blemish, she could not remain thus tame, thus spiritless, under such an aggravation of my wrongs; and either she would be the first to quit my merciless roof, or at least she would not so fearfully avoid giving me even the most unfounded pretence for denying her its shelter.—She must merit her sufferings, to bear them so meekly!"

Hence, even when really touched by the gentleness of my mistress, I seldom relented in my apparent sternness. In order to conquer, or at least to conceal, sentiments which I considered as effects only of weakness, I even forced myself on these occasions to increased severity. Unable to go the length of turning Euphrosyné out of doors, even though she had agreed from the first to make the continuance of my love the measure of her stay, I almost turned myself entirely out of my own dwelling;

and plunged more headlong into every species of dissipation than I had done before. Unto this period I had quaffed my wine to enjoy its flavour: I now drank to drive away my senses. Unto this period I had gamed to beguile an idle hour: I now played to produce a feverish excitement of my spirits. I staid out while I was able to renew my stake, and only returned home when utterly exhausted by my losses. Nay, when Euphrosyné, after sitting up alone all night, saw me return late in the morning, it often was only to vent on her unresisting meekness the spleen collected in my nocturnal career of disappointed extravagance. Yet she tarried on: for to me she had sacrificed her all; and though in me she found nothing but a thorn, yet by that thorn alone now hung her whole existence!

Euphrosyné was wont to be in readiness with a hot cup of coffee when I came in from my nightly revels. After gambling, it served as a restorative; but after drinking, it was the only thing capable of allaying the sort of temporary madness with which wine always affected my irritable brain. One morning, when alternate losses at dice and libations to Bacchus had sent me home half frantic, instead of finding my mistress as usual all alacrity to minister the reviving draught, to chafe my throbbing temples, and to perform what other soothing offices her awe of me permitted, I found her lying on the floor in a trance. I only thought her asleep; but on attempting to lift her up, her features were bruised, and her face all besmeared with blood. Unnerved by excess, and shaking with agitation, my arm, however, was wholly unable to support even her light weight, and I let her drop again. She thought I did so on purpose; for raising her head with great effort, she fixed on my countenance her haggard tearless eyes, and clasping her hands together, now for the first time vented her anguish in audible words. "I had been warned," she cried, with half-stifled emotion.

"How?" said I.

"That morning," answered she, "when unexpectedly you appeared among us in the meadow, you were scarcely out of sight when the cause of your coming was discussed. We agreed—foolish girls as we were—that chance alone had not brought you to the place, and drew lots to find out where lurked the secret attraction. I got the prize—if prize it was! A friend some years older than myself, observing my emotion, 'Euphrosyné,' she

whispered, 'if you care not for that stranger, frolic with him as you like; but if ever he should gain your affections, O! avoid him like a pestilence. From the moment he knows himself master of your heart, he will treat it as wayward children do their toys; he will not rest until he has broken it to pieces.'

"This was but the first warning, and only given by a human voice," continued my mistress: "a higher one came straight from heaven! You know the marble image found in our field, which now adorns our garden. Once, they say, it was flesh and blood—a hapless maiden like myself; but, alas! less susceptible, and therefore turned into stone! On the night of your outrage, as I rose from the prayer which once used ever to precede my repose, a deep hollow moan issued from its snowy bosom! Another and a louder shriek was heard when I confessed the tale to Mackari; and one still more dismal than the former rent the air when I left my kinsman's roof to fly to your arms!"

"And warned even by an insensible stone," I cried, "you would not see the precipice?"

"Ah!" exclaimed Euphrosyné, "reproach me with any thing but my love. It was that which, in spite of every circumstance that should have opened my eyes, still kept me obstinately blind."

"Your love," cried I, "neither merits my reproach, nor yet calls for my praise. It depends not on ourselves to withhold our affections, as it depends not on us to renew a worn-out passion."

"It is then true," cried Euphrosyné, "that you love me no more?"

"Has not that question been answered already?" said I, peevishly: "but you will not understand, unless all is spoken!"

At these words Euphrosyné put her hands to her ears, as if fearing to hear her formal dismissal; and immediately ran to shut herself in her adjoining chamber. I left the wayward girl to the solitude she sought, and unable to obtain any refreshment at home, immediately went out again. Exhausted with watching, sleep overcame me in the coffee-house whither I had gone for my breakfast; and as soon as I felt somewhat recruited by my short rest, a detachment of our party carried me away by force, to make me woo fickle fortune afresh at the gaming-table. Within the irresistible influence of its

magic circle I staid, and played, and drank, and slept—and played, and drank, and slept again—until, reeling out in the dark to go home, I fell from the steps; sprained my ankle, cut my face, and lay a while senseless on the pavement. Carried in again as soon as discovered in this plight, it became my fate to be tied by the leg in the very gambling-room which had already kept me spellbound so long.

I was so far an economist of time, as always to devote that of forced confinement to the irksome business of reflection; and I had a great deal of that sort of occupation accumulating on my hands to employ my present leisure. The unconcern of my pretended friends on seeing me suffer very soon made me draw unfavourable comparisons of their sentiments with those of Euphrosyné. Granting that she had been too susceptible before she knew me; how patient, how penitent, how devoted had she shown herself ever since! Yet how cruel the return I had made, and how deep the last wound I had inflicted!

The thought grew so irksome, that not daring to send for my mistress among a set of scoffers, and yet impatient to make her amends, I crept, as soon as the dawn again arose, off my couch, stole away, and limped home.

When I knocked at my door, no one answered from within. Louder I therefore knocked, and louder! but with no better success. At last my heart sunk within me, and my knees began to totter. Euphrosyné never stirred out:—could she—? I dreaded to know the truth, and yet I was near going mad with the delay. She might be ill, and unable to come down, though not yet beyond the reach of succour, or the comfort of kindness! It was possible she heard me, and had not strength to answer or to let me in. Timely assistance still, perhaps, might save her: even tardy tenderness, though shown too late to arrest her fleeting soul, might still at least allay the bitterness of its departure. A word, a look of sympathy might solace her last moments, and waft her spirit on lighter wings to heaven!

Frantic with impatience, I endeavoured to break open the sullen door, but could only curse its perverse steadiness in doing its duty. In despair at the delay, I was going for an axe to hew it from its hinges, when an old deaf neighbour, who began to suspect she heard a noise, came down half-dressed to lend her assistance. She employed nearly as much time before she let herself out, as

I had lost in trying to get in. At last, however, her feeble efforts were crowned with success. Forth she came, and put on her spectacles to scrutinize my person. A deliberate survey having satisfied her respecting my identity, she thrust her withered arm deep in her ample pocket, and drew out fifty things which neither of us wanted, before she ended by producing the key of my lodging, which she put into my hands with a low courtesy, as having been left in her care by the lady who was gone away!

"Thank God!--I have not killed her!" was my first exclamation. "That weight at least is off my mind!" And as soon as I had sufficiently recovered my breath, I inquired of the old woman the time and circumstances of Euphrosyné's departure; what conveyance had taken her away; in what direction she went; and, above all, what messages she had left?

These were useless queries, and a fruitless expenditure of breath. It took me half an hour to make my neighbour hear me; and when I succeeded at last, so near was she to dotage, that I could make nothing of her answers. On my asking, as the easiest question to understand, how long the key had been in her possession, she could only say, "ever since it had been given her."

Despairing of more explicit intelligence outside my threshold, I went in, and in three strides reached the top of the stairs and my own empty room. From that I ran into the next, equally empty and desolate; looked upon every table and shelf, under every seat and cushion, in every box and drawer, and behind every chest and wardrobe. My hopes were to find some letter, some note, some scrap of paper, written, if not in kindness, at least in anger, to inform me which way my poor girl had fled. But I looked in vain; there was nothing!

I possessed no clew whatever to a probable surmise: I could form no opinion on the strange event; I sat down in mute amazement, trying to think, and yet finding no point on which to fix my thoughts. At last, as my eyes continued to wander in total vacancy round the room, they fell upon some writing which assuredly had not been intended to court my sight; for it ran along the skirting of the wainscot, and could only have been written by Euphrosyné with her pencil as she lay on the ground. I stooped down to read, and only found some broken sentences, probably traced by my mistress the last time she left me to seek refuge in solitude. The sense seemed

addressed to herself more than to her destroyer, and the words were scarce legible. Thus ran the few lines I could make out:—

“At last he has spoken plainly!—I shall go—no matter where!—Let him rejoice. When he boasts of his triumphs over unsuspecting innocence, he may now add to all his former vauntings, ‘I have ruined Euphrosyné!’—and be proud to think a greater fall from purity to corruption, from honour to infamy, and from happiness to misery, never was achieved by his hands!” Then followed a string of half-obliterated words, among which all I could make out was an invocation to the Almighty not to cease pouring his blessings on my head for all poor Euphrosyné’s wrongs! A thousand daggers seemed, on reading this sentence, to pierce my heart at once.

Every thing remained as I had left it except Euphrosyné alone. She had taken nothing with her, for she had nothing to take. The last articles of her apparel worth any money had been sold to supply her necessities, or rather my extravagance.

A film now all at once dropped from before my eyes, and my former behaviour presented itself to me in a totally new light. Though I might still believe—and indeed now most anxiously wished to believe for the relief of my conscience—that Euphrosyné had not at all times been equally watchful of that perfect purity she boasted; that in some unguarded moment the inexperience of early youth had suffered her virtue to contract a slight speck; that the tale so boldly told by her waiting-woman was not wholly without foundation; yet, on contemplating her conduct on that eventful day, when she might for ever have wrapped every former stain in the ample impenetrability of the nuptial veil, but with a magnanimous disdain of all meanness or subterfuge resigned herself to poverty, persecution, and disgrace, I could not doubt that already at that period, at least the mental corruption, the taint of the soul (if ever it had existed), had been so entirely washed away by repentance, so entirely obliterated by subsequent propriety of conduct, as still to leave the whole crime of plunging a noble creature into irretrievable ruin ultimately chargeable upon me alone.

And supposing that even the account of Euphrosyné’s early frailty itself—that only sheet-anchor of my conscience amid a sea of distracting doubts—should after all turn out a mere fabrication, as seemed from Sophia’s

unprincipled conduct a thing not impossible; supposing the whole first chapter of Euphrosyné's short history should have been nothing but a scene of artless playful innocence; nay, supposing the thoughtless girl should have been ignorant even of the assignation itself, no doubt only brought to bear by some soporific drug; supposing that when the forlorn creature first came to my abode, only to avoid being driven publicly out of her own, she should have had nothing to reproach her own heart with but some latent sparks of love for her despoiler, which sentiments of a loftier nature would soon have extinguished but for the abasement to which she had been driven; supposing I thus had only plunged into everlasting perdition a being throughout the whole of her once happy career as unexceptionable in conduct as she had been enviable in circumstances, and that for no purpose but to end her race of undeserved sufferings by turning her out of doors, and forcing her upon the wide world without a friend, a relation, or a home, and at a time, too, when her situation demanded more than ordinary tenderness!—The thought was too dreadful even for me to bear: it racked me to the soul. And what rendered my remorse doubly pungent, love itself, that love which I had thought long annihilated, seemed to re-enter at the rents torn in my heart by pity. A thousand excellences in my mistress, before unheeded, now flashed upon my mind. From the embers of a more sensual flame, extinguished almost as soon as raised, now burst forth a brighter intellectual blaze never before experienced, as from a body in dissolution arise flames of pure ethereal fire.

Sorrow, self-reproach, and uncertainty seemed for a while to deprive me of all power of exertion; but the moment a ray of hope roused me from motionless dismay into fresh activity, I ran frantic all over Smyrna in search of my lost mistress. I abruptly stopped in the street every person, high or low, male or female, whom I thought likely to have witnessed her escape. I forcibly invaded every house in which I fancied she might be concealed. No place capable of harbouring any thing in the human shape, and which I dared investigate, did I leave unexplored. Of the individuals assailed by my inquiries, some laughed, some took offence, some reproached me for my inconsistency, and some supposed me to be a maniac broke loose from his confinement. I minded not

their surprise or their scoffing, but continued my pursuit while I had strength. Alas! I continued it in vain. No Euphrosyné could I find!

Reluctantly I now again turned me to the abhorred Sophia to assist me in my labour. The wretch had not only deceived me, betrayed Euphrosyné, and, by divulging all she ought to have concealed, involved the one in ruin and the other in disgrace; she had even, as if on purpose daily to enjoy the shame cast on Chrysopulo's house, hired a lodging directly opposite his gate; but vast failings are overlooked in those whose aid we want. I hied me to the ex-suivante full of conciliatory speeches; she met them with assurances of equal contrition, and expressed so much regret for her indiscretion, so much compassion for Euphrosyné, and so much sympathy with me, that in view of the readiness she showed to second my search, all was, or appeared to be, forgiven.

We shook hands. I made fresh promises, and Sophia entered upon fresh services.

My resolution this time was formed, and will be allowed to have been unexceptionable. The instant fortune crowned our united labours, Euphrosyné was to receive the meed of her long sufferings, or at least the offer of every reparation which I could make for my manifold offences. Not only I meant immediately to proclaim her my honoured, my wedded, my inseparable wife, but, what to some might seem more difficult or more problematical, I intended to become myself the best and most faithful of husbands.

Fate allowed me full time to study the requisites of that new character. Our twofold search did not turn out more successful than had done before my single-handed endeavours; by no means, however, for want of activity in Sophia. Like Satan her master, she seemed endowed with the gift of ubiquity. Not a day passed that she did not come to me with a long account of the places she had visited, and of those she meant to visit; of the hopes she had been disappointed of in one quarter, and of the expectations she entertained in another; of her glimpses here, and of her surmises there. So often did she drag me after her through every street and lane of Smyrna, that my friends pretended to think that she had herself stepped into Euphrosyné's place; and when the city had been ransacked through to the last garret and cellar, we extended our search to every village and hamlet within ten or fifteen miles round.

When at last I had explored every district within the mootsellimlik of Ismar until I no longer could think of any place unsearched, and found nothing left to do but to sit down in contented ignorance, or rather in calm despair, there flew in at my open window one evening a small silken bag, thrown by an invisible hand, and conveying a gold ring. It was one which I had put on Euphrosyné's finger immediately after the memorable farewell visit of her kind-hearted friends, and ere I called upon my companions to claim my bets. On the slip of paper twined round the ring were written the following words:—"Cease a pursuit as vain as it is thankless; nor seek any longer to disturb the peace of Euphrosyné, now cured of a worthless passion, and at rest in more merciful hands. The ring you once gave her in proof of your love reverts to you, in sign that she never more can accept your tardy, your un-availing tenderness."

These words, evidently written by the same hand which had originally pointed Euphrosyné out to me as a desirable conquest, seemed at last fully to explain her motives for leaving me, or at least her conduct since her disappearance. Nothing could be clearer, in my opinion, than that the artful schemer who had first instigated me to seduce the lovely girl, had availed himself of my forced absence from home to take her off my hands. I had been a mere tool to some more designing member of the nefarious set.

It might, however, in one sense be called considerate, thus at last to relieve me from all further anxiety and trouble; and nothing but the inherent perverseness of human nature could have changed as it did the cold indifference with which I had treated my mistress while she depended wholly upon my affection, into the warmth which her image rekindled in my heart the moment I supposed her comforted by another; but this new ardour, conceived too late, I kept to myself, and judging that other individual now preferred to be (though unknown) frequently in my company, I took uncommon pains to evince my gratitude for his proceedings. Lest he should have any doubt on this subject, not a day passed without my joining some festive party in excursions to Bournabad, to Sedi-Keui, and other places; and by these means I at last in reality recovered the lightness of heart which I affected, and that to such a degree as almost to grow frightened at my own unusual mirth, and to apprehend it might forbode some new impending calamity.

An excursion had often been projected, and as often put off, to a village a few miles from Smyrna, celebrated for the beauty of its situation. At last the party took place. We were sitting, half a dozen thoughtless souls, under the cool shade of a locust-tree. I had taken up a lyre, laid down by one of my companions, and was just going to try my long-neglected skill in a Greek ballad which I used to sing to Helena, when a peasant brought me a note of suspicious appearance.

Determined this time to know the author of this single-handed correspondence, I began by laying hold of its conveyer. The messenger seemed the quintessence of stupidity: my catechising could draw nothing from him, except that the billet had been committed to his care three miles off by a female hidden in her veil, come from a distance, and who immediately again took herself off. All that the bearer could or would say ending there, I turned me to the epistle. It ran thus:

“Did you ever hear of a Greek merchant whose name was Sozimato? Once he excelled Chrysopulo himself in riches, in ambition, and in sway; but fortune turned fickle. Chrysopulo saw new thousands weigh down his former thousands, and Sozimato ended a bankrupt. The match contracted between Chrysopulo’s son and Sozimato’s daughter now of course was cancelled; for between the rich and the poor no engagement could subsist. To sharpen the sting of the insult, the humble daughter of the bankrupt was offered a servant’s place in Chrysopulo’s family; for the upstarts exulted in treading on the neck of the fallen! The offer of arrogance was, however, accepted, and the taunts of insolence borne. A fever it was supposed, carried off Chrysopulo’s son; and Euphrosyné—a distant relation—became the adopted daughter. She too was rendered the victim of just revenge. A set of lawless young men had established a society for the purpose of ruining the peace of sober families. One member of this noble fraternity was spoken of in the town as more bold and unprincipled than the rest: he was singled out to cast dishonour on Chrysopulo’s house, and to sow misery among its members; and at last, through his instrumentality (for he was but a tool), that Euphrosyné, most unjustly aspersed in her unsullied virtue, became the kept-mistress of a needy adventurer. Foul disgrace, conjured up from all quarters, thus cast its cloud over Chrysopulo’s name.

"Here the work of vengeance might have ended, had not the adventurer too dared to treat with indignity the daughter of Sozimato. It was for this she joined in the search after his departed mistress; it was for this she permitted not the unfortunate girl to be found; it was for this she prevented her from being solaced by her lover's returning tenderness, even when she lay totally destitute, in a miserable garret, at the last period of her labour; and it was for this, finally, that she prepared the infidel wretch a world of endless pangs, by plying his hapless mistress with false accounts of his unrelenting barbarity, unto the last day of her existence!

"Great, no doubt, were the difficulties in preventing a meeting between the repentant sinner and his innocent victim. One day he penetrated into the very abode where she lay writhing under every agony of body and of mind. A ragged curtain alone kept her from his sight, and a single cry unstifled must have thrown him in her arms! Watchfulness, however, triumphed: the adventurer turned back in ignorance; and his Euphrosyné saw him no more. She was delivered, unaided by any one but the person who had served, had sold her, and now was striving that she might be sainted. Yet did the angel try to do what she could for Selim's child; seeing it ready to perish for want of sustenance, she resolved to save her infant's life, by completing her own shame. Ere, however, the sacrifice could be accomplished, she expired;—expired among strangers, pronouncing Selim's name! The more merciful hands in which this miserable man was informed she was at rest, were those of her Maker; the ring he received had been taken from her cold corpse; and the sole worker of all this wo, I scarcely need add, was the injured, and now satisfied, Sophia."

I do not know how I was able to read this letter calmly to the end, except from a sort of stupor, which for a moment kept all my faculties, save that of mere perception, suspended! The first word, however, which one of our party uttered, broke the fascination, set loose my entranced senses, and with them all the demons of hell which had been gathering all the while in my bosom. What species of violence I committed in breaking away from the convivial scene to pursue the detestable Sophia is wholly beyond my knowledge. I neither saw, nor heard, nor thought until I reached Smyrna.

Sophia knew me too well to wait my return. Ere I
VOL. II.—G

received her note, she had left that place for ever: nor could I trace her flight. It was only some time after, when, hopeless of discovering her abode, I had committed to Heaven the care of her punishment, that in the least likely of places I met the fury. She again tried to avoid me—again commenced the race of conscious guilt: but this time to no purpose. Her crime was one of those, which, more atrocious than many that call forth the utmost rigour of justice, yet deride its limited power. I therefore took into my own hands the punishment of so dire an offender: nor did that circumstance render her chastisement more lenient.

This unlooked-for event seemed somewhat to refresh me. For a time I felt the thirst of my soul assuaged—the raging fever of my blood allayed; but the cessation of pain was only transient: the image of Euphrosyné, expiring on a bed of wretchedness, and in the belief that I was hailing the hour of her final departure with songs of cruel joy, when I would have given my own life to have found the poor sufferer, to have taken her back to my now softened bosom, and there to have cherished her to the end of her happier days, soon began to haunt me incessantly; and too truly I found that the fury Sophia had succeeded in insinuating into my contrite heart a canker which I was destined to carry alive to the grave!

CHAPTER X.

THE painful chapter is concluded; that chapter to which I looked forward with dismay; and which I hurried over with shame and sorrow. Frequently during the dreary course of the last pages has my hand felt as if arrested, and my pen ready to drop from my fingers; but I wished to offer in the faithful narrative of my injustice the only sacrifice in my power to the memory of my Euphrosyné; and having performed this severe but wholesome penance, I seem to breathe somewhat more freely, and to proceed on the sequel of my narrative with less reluctance. Too forcibly, however, do I feel that the film which obscured my judgment during the sad events of which I have made a full confession will be admitted with

the unimpassioned reader as a feeble palliation only of my offences; nay, that even my bitter repentance itself will scarcely prevent such an abhorrence of my fault to take possession of his mind, as must pursue me with its blasting influence to the end of my tale.

After learning the fate of my unfortunate mistress, there still remained one other task of fearful anxiety to be performed; namely, to ascertain that of my no less pitiable child. I knew not whether the babe had followed its mother to the grave, or was still alive to share its father's misery; but no Sophia any longer intervening between me and the object of my search, it was soon successful. I discovered the poor people under whose humble roof my Euphrosyné had breathed her last; I found in their arms a lovely infant, depending on charity for its support, and learned that the smiling babe was my own. External proof was not requisite to confirm the assertions of its foster-father; too brightly shone in the cherub's eye the heaven of its mother's looks;—that heaven in which, but for my own waywardness, I might have lived for ever blessed. Alexis had her radiant brow, her pouting playful lip, her dimpled chin. The very rag which enveloped the poor infant was a relic of Euphrosyné's last earthly vestment; once, in her days of splendour, a rich tissue of purple and gold;—now so tarnished, so stripped of its original lustre, that it seemed to have continued to the last the faithful emblem of her whose graceful limbs it had encircled until they waxed cold in death.

I pressed my child to my bosom, to my lips, to my eyes. Hurt by the roughness of my face, perhaps annoyed by the copious flowing of my tears, the poor babe began to cry. So full of terror were its looks, one might have fancied it had recognised its father; I therefore reluctantly laid it down again, and discontinued my endearments; but fearful lest gratuitous care might have less merit in the execution than it had in the design, I told the poor people I should rid them of the burden, and take my child away. They turned pale at the intelligence, and, though rewarded to the full extent of my scanty means, wept on resigning my Alexis into other hands. What little sum I was able to raise by the sale of my remaining trinkets, I deposited for his maintenance with the most trustworthy people I could find; and then began to consider how I should live myself. The Turkish law, it is

true, grants not to the disappointed creditor the vindictive pleasure of shutting up for life his disabled debtor, nor punishes the man who has got into debt by preventing him from ever getting out again; but still in Turkey, as elsewhere, one may starve even out of jail.

There were some who would have had me inform my friend Spiridion of my distress; but I could not bear to ask a favour of one to whom I could make no return. "Far better was it," thought I, "to be indebted for my subsistence to my own bravery than to the reluctant compassion of others." Weary of life, and anxious only to banish reflection, I meditated joining some of those bold fellows who, having occupied an abandoned district, imitate greater states, and very fairly tax the traveller for trespassing on their domain. Theirs was the employment—doubtless noble in itself—of transferring to the needy the superfluities of the affluent; and who could plead more pinching wants than a father burthened with the necessities of a motherless babe, and forced to fight for subsistence or to see his infant starve? Nor in Turkey did the profession of a bandit lack its respectability. A high-minded man might embrace the career of the haïdoot without blushing. While most busily employed in reaping its benefits, he still recognised certain principles of honour; and when tired of its perils (if fortunate enough never to have been caught in the fact), nothing prevented his laying down his dangerous trade unmolested, boasting of his past exploits, and seeking some safer and less precarious employment, on a par with such among his fellow-citizens as had, in the capacity of magistrates or rulers, pursued the same profession more unostentatiously. Sick at heart, and ruined in purse, I saw in a robber's life the only remedy for both diseases. Besides, the scheme, if well managed, might be rendered preparatory to another, which I had secretly cherished ever since the commencement of my embarrassments. At Bagdad was seated on the throne of the ancient caliphs a pasha more resembling an independent sovereign than a sultan's representative. Himself the disposer of sundry lesser pashaliks, his wide domain, and constant warfare with his manifold neighbours, offered to the soldier of fortune a fertile field for promotion. I wished to try his service. Some of the principal troops of banditti that grace the Turkish empire lined the various roads to his capital; and I might in my way to that new theatre of my ambition,

either occasionally join their numerous marauding parties, or, sportsmanlike, take my gun, and singly arrest the flight of some passing traveller, to while away my time, or supply my necessities during the tedious journey.

Nobler game, however, was for a moment near attracting me to more distant realms, where rulers themselves were despoiled, and kings hunted down. An Italian had dropped as if from the clouds at Smyrna, who in appearance only wooed the muses, but in reality belonged to the sect of political propagandists, about that time disseminated all the world over to preach emancipation from every bondage, natural, civil, and religious. The disturbance of my mind and the distress of my situation could not remain long concealed from the keen-eyed improvisatore, and he resolved to make them subservient to his secret purposes.

"Listen!" would he say in a prophetic tone; "the time is at hand when all the tottering monuments of ignorance, credulity, and superstition, no longer protected by the foolish awe they formerly inspired, shall strew the earth with their wrecks. Every where the young shoots of reason and liberty, starting from between the rents and crevices of the worn-out fabrics of feudalism, are becoming too vigorous any longer to be checked. They soon will burst asunder the baseless edifices of self-interest and prejudice which have so long impeded their growth. Religious inquisition, judicial torture, monastic seclusion, tyranny, oppression, fanaticism, and all the other relics of barbarism, are to be driven from the globe. Total annihilation awaits the whole code of hereditary rights, exclusive privileges, and mortifying distinctions, only derived, by men born equal, from mouldering ancestors and musty parchments. Soon shall armorial bearings, empty titles, and frivolous orders cease to insult man's understanding. Whatever appeared great only through the mist of error, whatever was magnified into importance only through the medium of prejudice, shall have its deceitful size detected by the torch of reason, and shall then be hurled back into its pristine insignificance. Sceptred imbecility, nodding on its crazy thrones, shall ere long be laid prostrate in the dust; and subjects, making sovereigns their footstools, shall assert man's primeval equality by mounting upon their tyrants' necks into their tyrants' places. Already does in more than one realm the hallowed work of regeneration advance with rapid strides;

already throughout Gallia streams day and night the blood of victims ; already dungeons forced open, castles levelled with the ground, and feudal records committed to the flames, mark the approach of a happier era ; while one monarch shot in the midst of his court, and another dragged to the scaffold by his own subjects, are but the first-fruits offered up at the new-raised shrine of liberty, whose temple must some day encompass the whole universe. You, then, who here pine in inglorious sloth, drive away the tedium which oppresses your spirits by joining the noble cause. Enlist among the uprising liberators of mankind. Leave this worn-out empire of despotism and slavery, this den of tigers doomed to speedy destruction, and seek on the yellow banks of the Seine the blessed dawn of a fast-spreading revolution. Hasten to that busy capital of all nations, where from all quarters of the globe flock the lovers of liberty and the haters of kings ; and meet with welcome and with denizenship all that yearn to establish, sword in hand, more liberal opinions. Your part on this grand theatre already is marked out for you. All you have to do is, to present yourself in the august assembly of the great nation as the representative of oppressed and mourning Greece. Be the eloquent, the pathetic organ of its ardent wish to share in the benefits which France confers on the world. Tell of the myriads that to her lift their imploring hands. Your person is showy, your lungs are potent, your speech untrammelled by troublesome timidity, and with a dress designed by the painter David (I would advise a Grecian tunic), and a few attitudes of uncontrollable emotion imitated from the sublime Talma, it will be your own fault if in the convention you are not hailed as the worthy descendant of Harmoodius and Aristogiton !”

‘This rhapsody made me laugh, but I thought the subject serious. In the midst of all my grief it interested my vanity, and I inquired the shortest way to Paris. We agreed, that as soon as arrived on European ground, Cirico (the poet) should, in view of his superior local knowledge, act as my *avant-courier*. Unfortunately, his impatience marred the project. Desirous of giving a specimen of his talent, he improvised himself away from Smyrna ere I had the least intimation of his departure. In his hurry he left his bill unpaid, and took away his landlord’s silver spoons. This mistake cast a shade upon his doctrine. I bade mourning Greece wipe away her

tears without me, and, instead of journeying in behalf of universal liberty to Paris, resumed the plan of my predatory expedition to Bagdad.

In conformity to the nature of my views, I set out lightly provisioned, but heavily armed; and the first stage of my journey witnessed the first trial of my skill. At a hamlet where travellers sometimes stop to refresh, a caravan of Franks was waiting for the cool of the evening to proceed in greater comfort. Only come from Sedi-Keui, and only intending to visit Ephesus (or rather the spot once adorned by that city), these dilettanti in ruins had provided no guard. I proposed to two or three loiterers whom I picked up by the way to teach them more prudence. Neither I nor they, we agreed, would commit a serious robbery, but this was only a frolick; and we swore to each other faithfully to restore what we took, unless we thought it very particularly worth keeping.

A little circuit and a quicker pace brought us first to a defile which very soon after, and just at dusk, our travellers also entered. Their attendants were suffered to pass on; but we could not help interrupting a very earnest discussion in which the two principal personages, lagging behind a few paces, were engaged. It was only for the purpose of demanding their money. The request they readily enough complied with; and to his purse, the elder of the two, in the excess of his liberality, moreover added a very appropriate lecture.

But for this circumstance, the orator's somewhat singular travelling-garb would eternally have kept concealed from my knowledge that I had the honour of stripping the Baron H——, Swedish consul-general at Smyrna, and my own very worthy acquaintance. Residing in the season at Sedi-Keui, he had insisted on accompanying his young friend—an eastern tourist—on this antiquarian excursion; and I was the first object not quite two thousand years old which I suppose had engaged their attention. It was impossible to keep the money of a man whose good fare I had more than once enjoyed; wherefore, falling at the consul's feet, "Take back your purse," cried I; "it would bring me ill fortune, and I have had enough already."

At these words H—— stared on me in mute astonishment, until, convinced that his senses did not deceive him, he at last exclaimed, with a loud groan, "Selim Aga, for heaven's sake, is it you?"

"It is," answered I.

"And what," resumed the consul, "can have brought you to this?"

I blushed; and seeing my companions had chosen to decamp during the parley, "We are alone," said I; "let me go on with you to your next halting-place, and there you shall hear all."

The proposal was accepted, and the stage achieved in five or six hours; for my travellers never went out of a foot-pace. By a little brook, under the already acceptable shade of a plane-tree, we sat down an hour after sunrise, and I told a not very exhilarating story. At its conclusion, the consul was again entreated by me to take back his purse; but this he would not hear of. He had not much liked, he owned, to have it forcibly taken from him; but he now earnestly begged I might think it worthy my acceptance.

"To what purpose?" exclaimed I:—"my object was to try my hand at a highway robbery, more for the sake of the act than the plunder. The things which money may purchase I can no longer prize. Life to me has lost its sweets!"

"Subdue your passions, young man;" answered H——, "it is to them you owe all your misery."

"Alas!" was my reply, "what am I to believe? Do not philosophers maintain that the passions are the only road to knowledge, to power, and to virtue?—that the inert being who never has felt their influence on his own mind knows not how to guide the will of others—sees man as a machine whose movements baffle his skill—constantly miscalculates the conduct of his fellow-creatures, and only attempting to move men like blocks, by force, must find a resistance which mocks his merely physical impulse. Without the passion of love, would woman encounter the pangs which preserve our species on the globe? without that of ambition, would man endure the toil of maintaining order, through means of a well-conducted government, among his headstrong fellow-creatures? Is it not the passion of avarice alone that brings in contact for universal benefit the industry and the produce of the most distant countries; and what but the passion for fame makes man risk health, fortune, nay, life itself, for the advantages, perhaps the amusement, of generations yet unborn? Like the heat of the sun, that of the passions may strengthen a few poisons, but alone

it brings forth all the sweets and healthful plants of the creation."

H—— shook his head. "It is feeling," said he, "which, like the sun's genial warmth, ripens each fairest fruit. Passions, like a scorching blaze, only burn them to ashes. Would you behold the effects of the former; look at my young friend here. Calm, healthful, and blooming, he is the bee that sucks the flowers of every clime, some day to add their honey to the stores of his grateful countrymen. Would you know the consequence of the latter; look in the brook beside you."

I advanced my head over the glassy pool: but from its deep bosom up rose to meet my searching eye a countenance so pale and ghastly—a cheek so wan and feverish, that I started back with horror. I felt the reproof, bowed assent, and said no more.

To his purse, which H—— positively refused to take back, but allowed me, if I liked, to keep only as a loan, his companion, rich as well as romantic, now insisted on adding his mite. He tore a leaf out of his pocket-book, and with the pen and ink which he carried in a case about him, wrote a draft on a banker at Haleb, to whom he was already known. This order he made me promise solemnly to present.

Greatly could I have wished to devote to the new friends thus strangely made the time which they meant to stay at Ephesus: but I feared lest my presence might be a restraint upon the freedom of their rambles, and when Ayasolook rose in sight, with its Moorish mosque and its citadel, I blessed them, kissed the hand of the elder, embraced the younger, and went my lonely way.

As nothing happened in the sequel of my journey to answer the promises of the beginning—as I stopped no more travellers on the road, nor received more purses, I shall be brief. Alternately pushing on by land or by sea, according as opportunities offered, I found the one irksome and the other tedious. A Turkish vessel conveyed me to Scanderoon. The cabin had been hired for a wealthy merchant's harem. Nothing so little seen, except thunder, ever made so much noise. On the least motion of the ship all the women used to abuse the captain. The only instrument capable of restoring them to order was the husband's pipe stick: indeed, it was much oftener applied to his wives' backs than to his own lips;

and the whole of this good gentleman's active life seemed to be divided between a puff and a blow.

The very day I landed at Scanderoon I proceeded on to Bailan, there to wait in a purer air a caravan of Armenian merchants. On the arrival of the good folks I thought I beheld, instead of the most pacific people on earth, a troop of Tartars, only breathing war and bloodshed. Each man looked like a walking armoury, stuck all round with every species of offensive weapon. In confidence, however, they soon desired me not to be alarmed: "They made it a rule," they said, "never to use the arms they carried."

Of this circumstance a detachment of Coordish horsemen,* which we met on the road, seemed perfectly aware. Though not quite half our number, they no sooner saw us approach than they drew their sabres, flung a sheepskin across the path, and civilly desired each of us to drop into it as we passed the sum of five piastres. I took the liberty of expostulating: but my friends were so averse to acts of violence, and so anxious for the honour of paying my share of the contribution, that I could not, either in conscience or good breeding, deny them that pleasure. Notwithstanding these little rencounters might lead to a contrary conclusion, there are guards stationed in the narrow passages of the mountains, to protect the travellers, and to awe the banditti; but they constantly make mistakes, and inform the Coords of the approaching traveller, instead of warning the traveller of the neighbouring Coords.

The fourth and last night of our journey we stopped at Martahwan; a village of Ansariehs,† of pleasurable notoriety among the Halebines. The owner of the hovel marked out for my lodging, however, seemed ill provided; but the piteous manner in which he apologized for the poorness of the entertainment, by informing me that his wife was dead, his daughter an infant, and his mother a decrepit old woman, made me hasten to relieve his mind, by stating that a mouthful of rice and a corner to lie down in were all the comforts I aspired at. As to the conductor of our caravan, whose whole life was spent in travelling

* Coordish horsemen—The Coords or inhabitants of Coordistan lead, like the Tartars, a pastoral and predatory life; and roam all over Asia Minor, for the purposes of pasture and of plunder.

† Ansariehs—a tribe supposed to worship the evil spirit, and, unlike the Mohammedans, by no means tenacious of the chastity of their wives and daughters.

backward and forward between Haleb and Scanderoon, he had wisely contrived that his conveniences should not depend, like those of its other ever-changing members, on the chances of the road. Taking advantage of the utmost latitude of the Mohammedan law, he had not only provided himself with four wives, but had distributed these so judiciously between the four stations of the journey, that, though every night on the road, he every night slept at home.

At Haleb I failed not to go—lest I might seem forgetful of the kindness shown me—to the suburb of Djedaïdé, and there to present the draft given me by the young traveller for my trouble in waylaying him. It was addressed to an old Provençal merchant, a sort of humorist, who always appeared in a rage, never agreed with anybody, contradicted himself when he found no one else to contradict; and if a stranger to his whims incautiously fell into his opinion, took it as an affront, and demanded an explanation. On my handing him the check, he alternately looked at the bill and at me, and seemed to wonder how the two came together. This I explained to a certain degree, and thereupon he readily paid me, launching out into long praises of our common friend, “who,” he said, “was a youth capable of teaching many old ones.” I observed, that to me he had seemed quite the child of nature; but here I found I had got on the wrong scent. “Child of nature!” cried the Provençal, “no more than you, or I, or pickled olives. If he were, I should expect to be devoured by him. The human beings that are nearest to nature eat their enemies, make love to their mistresses by felling them to the ground with a club, beat out their wives’ brains when they get tired of their persons, and inter with the dead mothers their living babes. Except such monsters as these, all our fellow-creatures are in different degrees the children of art; the Indian and the Arab, as well as the European and the Chinese: for with reason begins art; and the first man who made use of the reasoning faculty—if it were only to scoop out a drinking bowl, or the point of a fishing hook—for ever took leave of simple nature; and did very wisely!”

After this *tirade* the worthy gentleman, inviting me to be seated, informed me, that finding little of the resource of conversation at Aleppo, where the natives were, to use his own words, *naturellement bêtes*, and his own countrymen *passablement animaux*, he had addicted himself to

philosophy *à corps perdu*:—an expression perhaps not wholly applicable, as I found him, on the contrary, to be of the sect who, only seeking to be useful, never by any chance lose sight of the body, and only estimate things according as they can be eaten or drank. “In fact, fragrant odours, delicious music, beautiful gardens, and such like,” my friend observed, “lose all their merit the moment one becomes deaf, or blind, or afflicted with a cold in the head!” He therefore—only esteeming *le solide*—held them in great contempt, as totally unphilosophical; and whenever they were praised in his hearing, used shrewdly to ask, “*à quoi bon tout cela ?*”

Meanwhile, dinner being announced, he jumped up, and cried out with exceeding glee, “*Allons-y, car il est très philosophique de manger :*” a truth to which I so fully assented, that I was invited to take my share, and for once had an opportunity of beholding a sage truly intent upon putting his doctrine in practice. Indeed, he did this to such a degree as almost to overshoot the mark, and to exceed the limits of utility; for, though at every one of the good dishes which a well-trained confidential servant successively enumerated in a loud voice, he emphatically exclaimed, “*Eh mon Dieu, qu'est-ce que cela me fait ?*” yet, being wholly absorbed in the eloquent invective this gave rise to against the pernicious art of cookery, he went on practically evincing its dangers, until I feared his philosophy might end fatally, and was going to impart my apprehension to his servant—when luckily the same idea struck this faithful domestic. He whispered something in his master's ear; who hereupon reddened, and turning round to me, said, “*Je fais si peu attention à ce que je mange, que je suis sujet à m'oublier, et à ne pas discontinuer jusqu'à ce qu'on m'avertisse :*” in order to ensure the performance of which necessary office, the prudent Provençal had with infinite forecast granted his trusty attendant a considerable annuity—but upon his own more philosophic life.

Dinner, dessert, coffee, and liqueurs being over, I thanked my host for his entertainment, and took my leave. “Ah!” exclaimed he, “why must I remain here to look after pistachios and tobacco, while you are going to behold the august site of ancient Babylon—that cradle of wisdom, that fountain-head of gnosticism, which let man into all the secrets of the Divine emanation, and into all the mysteries of the universal soul! No doubt you will tread

with veneration its hallowed soil, kiss with rapture its sacred dust, and make an ample store of its inestimable bricks. But, no—you only go to seek the filthy gold of a pasha!" I laughed; owned I saw more of the *utile* in a few sequins than in a whole cart-load of worn-out brick-bats, with inscriptions which no one could understand, even though they should have been manufactured in Babylon; begged the merchant's commands for that august place, and took my departure.

To an unphilosophical traveller Aleppo was not a disagreeable abode, though it had its inconveniences. The stranger risked being torn to pieces by the shereefs if he liked the janissaries best, stoned by the janissaries if he preferred the shereefs, and knocked down by both if he liked neither pre-eminently. Every day the city was disturbed by the feuds between these rival bodies. I left them to settle their differences without my assistance, and made my bargain with the kerwan-bashi of a small kafflé* for my conveyance to Bagdad. The conductor of the caravan was to defray all expenses—tolls to Turks, Arabs, and Turkmen included; and to go, not by the great desert, where we expected nothing but pilfering Bedoweens, pestilential winds, and clouds of parching dust; but by the longer and more agreeable circuit of Moossool, described as an uninterrupted succession of populous villages and cultivated tracts.

On the appointed day we set out. Among the party was an inquisitive prying marmoset, who could not rest until he had sifted out the business and profession of every member of the caravan. When it came to my turn to be cross-questioned, I honestly told him, under promise of betraying me to nobody, that I was a physician, disguised as a military man, to avoid the annoyance of consultations. The secret was soon buzzed about, and immediately the whole party paid court to no one but me. Each individual contrived in turn some opportunity cunningly to introduce the topics of health and disease, and in a discreet way to consult me on all his complaints, past, present, and future. One Arab only of the suite was endowed with so perversely good a constitution as not to be able to discover in himself the symptom of a single lurking ailment; and feelingly lamented his ill-luck in being obliged to forego so fine an opportunity for a cure.

* Kafflé—small caravan.

The first medicines I distributed were mere balls of bread and soap; but I soon found the bowels of the company too *exigeant* for so gentle a prescription. I therefore made bold to purloin some portion of a bale of ipecacuanha, directed to the missionaries at Bagdad, which I knew by the smell, and so found means to satisfy my friends. They were not particular as to the mode in which the medicine operated, but merely as to the vehemence of its action. A man in a fever sily drank off the restorative I had prepared for one with an abscess; and one in the colic put into his stomach the lotion intended for the leg of another who had broken his shin: but these trifles affected not my reputation. It presently grew so splendid, that in our evening halts I no longer dared to stir out of the khan where we stopped for fear of being forcibly dragged away to feel pulses. Fortunately, the crossing of the small desert, which we preferred to coasting the banks of the Tigris, enabled me to drop my assumed character, by interrupting for a while the affluence of patients. I declared I was not a physician; and immediately the complaints of my travelling companions, which they thought radically cured, all returned upon them with double force.

Halting in a plain between Nissabeen and Moossool, we came in contact with a party of travellers, whose route crossed our track, and who stopped to rest where we did. At first our guides and the strangers conversed together very amicably, but presently high words arose between them, and the quarrel at last became so loud and violent that I expected it to end in a pitched battle. We thought it wisest not to interfere, and contented ourselves with listening attentively. For a long while, however, none of us could make any thing of the dispute, except that it was about some great personage, whom, it seems, our Arabs had not mentioned with due reverence. When the matter came to be explained, this personage turned out to be the Devil. The strangers were Yezidees; a sect who maintain that, whether Satan be at present in or out of favour in heaven, he continues not the less to exert great sway upon earth, and therefore ought to be treated with proper respect; and as they think it wise to make friends every where—not knowing where their destiny may ultimately place them—they judiciously divide their worship between the powers of light and of darkness. The party in question were on a pilgrimage

from Mount Sindjar their residence to the tomb of Schaich Adi their patron.

Hearing all these circumstances, I immediately walked over to these worthy people, and begged most earnestly to state to them that we were all in reality much more in his Satanic majesty's interests than we pretended; for my own share requested particularly to have a good word spoken for me in their prayers to him, and, after mutual civilities on parting, very respectfully wished them at the Devil.

New figures joined the caravan at Moossool. Among them stood prominent a fat, sleek, ruddy-faced Armenian. His nominal residence, he told me, was Yulfa,* his real abode any part of the road between Turkey, Persia, and India. Already had he spent, in carrying merchandise backward and forward between those countries, two good thirds of man's ordinary span of life; and still did he as little as ever meditate a more tranquil mode of existence for the remainder of his days. It is true, that though Maallim Moorsa's body was in constant motion, his mind seemed stationary, and neither to advance nor to retrograde an inch: and it was no doubt owing to the complete repose of his intellectual part that the corporeal portion so well stood the fatigue he made it undergo. With him, the sword, so far from wearing out the scabbard, appeared of no use but to keep that scabbard properly poised, amid the jolting of his horse or camel.

"Tell me, Maallim Moorsa," said I, one day, as we stopped to water our camels, "what can tempt you, at your age and with your fortune, to toil harder, and to allow yourself fewer indulgences than the meanest of your own domestics? and far from home and friends to spend your days jolting on a rough-paced dromedary, and your nights sweltering in a wretched berth? Are hunger, thirst, burning sands, nipping blasts, tormenting insects, venomous reptiles, extortionary guides, rapacious enemies, ruinous engagements, and unexpected losses, so very indispensable to your happiness, that you must travel hundreds and hundreds of miles in search of these little adventitious enjoyments?"

"I will tell you," answered the placid Armenian. "It is habit, all-powerful habit that makes me live as I do: habit, more persuasive than the suggestions of reason

* Yulfa—a suburb of Ispahan.

and the remonstrances of friends. When first I commenced my wandering mode of life, I only intended to continue it during a limited period. The repose at home which followed each journey seemed short, the setting out afresh was irksome: I reluctantly quitted a young and handsome wife, a group of fond and playful children, and a set of jovial and hospitable friends, for new fatigues and dangers, and never did I start without saying to myself, 'Well! let me only possess a decent competency, and I shall sit down never more to move, until packed up like my own goods, to be carried to the grave!'

"But mark the sequel! As years rolled on, my wife grew old and cross, my children left me to set up separate establishments, my convivial friends became sedate and parsimonious, and I myself by degrees began to lose, in my lonely journeys, my former keen relish for society. As with my increasing wealth my ideas of a decent competency enlarged, my taste for the things it was intended to secure diminished. Instead of feeling a greater impatience to get home, and more pleasure in staying under my own roof than I used to do, I now find precisely the reverse to be the case. I travel homewards more leisurely; I am able to sleep more soundly on the night which precedes my arrival; and the happiness of being with my family sooner loses its zest. My increasing torpor of mind and of body more speedily crave that excitement which only the bustle and shaking of the caravan can give: the desire of returning to my business and journeys revives more quickly: I am bent with greater force upon still achieving one last lucrative expedition ere I sit down for ever; and I can less bear the idea of already crossing myself up, like the worm in the web of its own weaving, for the whole of the time that is to precede my final change."

"Man, man!" cried I, "struggle against this increasing restlessness; or what good are your riches to do yourself or others?"

"Alas, I have struggled!" replied the Armenian. "It was but the very last time of my being at home that I said to myself, 'Maallim Moorsa, Maallim Moorsa, dost thou mean never to be quiet? Thy daughters are well married, thy sons in excellent business, thou possessest three times as much as with thy old Rachel thou canst spend in the most profuse living. Then wander not any longer about the world like one bereft of house and

home; but, by staying among thy friends, and giving up all further ventures, secure thyself from the risk of losses and sorrows;' and thereupon I forced myself to try to enter into all the various enjoyments of a sedentary life. But alas! the thing would not do: I soon found a noisome evil steal upon me, penetrate my inmost marrow, and spoil the relish of all my pleasure. It was not loss—it was not sorrow; but it was far more intolerable than either—it was an ennui! An insuperable listlessness took possession of my being, a nausea past all enduring pursued me incessantly. In the midst of friends, of good cheer, and of comforts of every description, I cast a look of envy upon every human being who set out to encounter new fatigues and dangers. The recital of the speculations, the purchases, the sales, the commissions, and the profits of other merchants, made my heart bound, and my mouth water with longing. My own existence, while unemployed in similar transactions, appeared to me a mere blank, or rather a gloomy expanse of entire darkness; and my melancholy and pining must at last have brought me prematurely to the grave, had not a sensible physician been called in to give his opinion of the actual disease of the body into which my mental gloom had degenerated. Instead of a certain dose of bark and senna, to be taken at noon and at night, he prescribed so many pieces of shawl and bales of silk, to be bought in Cashmere and to be sold at Smyrna. The very prescription made me revive. The moment I set about taking the remedy I felt like a fish put back into the water; my decaying strength returned, and my fading cheek resumed its pristine hue."

"Your case," said I, shrugging up my shoulders, "I see is hopeless."

"I fear it is," answered Moorsa. "I have lived a constant traveller, and a traveller, I suppose, I shall die. On these roads, on which I spent my youth and manhood, I feel destined to end my days. But I do not much repine at this ordination: it affords me a pleasure which no other could give. I talk not of that of seeing different manners and customs. Those are things we Armenians care little about. But while abroad, I fancy that all the beings I possess at home are angels; and I never stay at home long enough to be undeceived."

This account of Maallim Moorsa made a deep impression upon my mind: it alarmed me for myself. If a heavy

Armenian with a comfortable home had, by excessive indulgence, suffered roving habits to take such root in his constitution as to despair of ever enjoying a stationary existence on this side the grave, how much more was a state of incurable restlessness likely to become the confirmed disease of one who, like me, was by nature moreover averse from domestication, and possessed not in space the least little clod of earth of my own, on which to sit down when tired of rambling, but, like the loose sands in the desert, ever remained liable to be blown about from place to place, by every slightest gust of wind. I felt the danger so great, that from that instant I determined, on the first opportunity, to fix myself somewhere. Already I possessed in my little Alexis a polar star, to which began to point all my thoughts, all my wishes: a magnet, whose attraction I felt even when steering in a contrary direction. Him I should some day have near me—him I should educate—him I should make the sole object of my care: but to execute that project I must have a home—I must have means;—and in search of that home, and of those means, I must for the present go on wandering as before.

CHAPTER XI.

OUR journey ended not with Maallim Moorsa's description of his: we still passed on the road many a weary day. At last, however, we reached a vast suburb of mud, crossed a long bridge of boats, and entered the celebrated city of Bagdad. As I advanced, I could not help at every step exclaiming, "Is this the capital of Haroon-al-raschid? this the residence of Zobeïdé? this the favourite scene of eastern romance? How fallen from its ancient splendour!"

Suleiman still governed the vast pashalik of Bagdad; the last and highest fruit of many successive vicissitudes and promotions. A Georgian by birth, and by condition a mamluke, he had in 1775, on the death of his predecessor and patron, been appointed to the mootsellimlik of Basra. Besieged in that city by Kherim-khan, the usurper of the Persian monarchy, he held out fifteen

months ere he surrendered the place; was, in consequence of the capitulation, carried a captive to Sheeras, and, after a two years' detention, had, on the death of Kerim, the good fortune to be again restored to his government. To this subordinate appointment the Porte, in consideration of his valour and his services, soon after added the pashalik of Bagdad, the most extensive and powerful of the Turkish empire.

Long did Suleiman sustain with unexampled dignity the weight of his manifold honours. His warlike talents kept in awe the fierce hordes of tributary Coords and Arabs at the two opposite extremities of his vast province, while his justice and moderation endeared him to the milder inhabitants of the intervening districts. But ere I beheld his dominions his glory had begun to fade, his resplendent sun to set. For some time past, both the body and the mind of the mighty Suleiman seemed to have lapsed from their former energy into a state of imbecility and torpor. Achmet, once a groom in Suleiman's stable, now held in his stead the reins of empire. In the capacity of the pasha's kehaya, he enjoyed both the direction of his councils and the command of his armies: but he was not content merely to represent; he totally superseded his master. Suleiman was forgotten in his favourite, and while the pasha only resembled the inert idol concealed in the sanctuary, the kehaya was the high-priest, who, holding the keys of the adytum, ruled the people with despotic sway, and swept away all their offerings.

My former situation and services in Turkey procured me access to this all-powerful personage. I was received at his levee with the utmost courtesy. Nothing, indeed, could be more fascinating than Achmet's exterior. His features were fine, his figure noble, his manners dignified yet mild, his wit playful without pungency: he seemed to promote unrestrained liberty of speech, even where it attacked most directly his opinion and interests; his own expressions often dropped as if from an unguarded lip and guileless heart. He spoke with affability to all, and never ceased bewailing the pomp his situation required. No passion ever could be perceived to disturb the serenity of his countenance or the placidity of his temper. He would occasionally perform acts of great liberality; always expressed his repugnance to harsh or cruel measures, and when compelled by reasons of state to

sign the death-warrant even of his bitterest enemy, shed tears of sympathy which he seemed afraid to show.

But black was the heart wrapped in this fair covering. If Achmet's countenance remained ever serene—if no angry word escaped his lip, no passionate gesture ever gave vent to his resentment, his malignant feelings only rankled the more fiercely within his steel-hardened bosom: his apparent candour was but the snare in which he entrapped the confidence of the unwary. Humble in his manner, his heart swelled with unbounded pride: for every piastre he gave in gifts, his agents doubled their exactions tenfold: his aversions, his hatreds, undiscoverable in the presence of their object, broke out with greater virulence in distant times and places. The more he expatiated on the pleasure of pardoning, the more certain it was that he meditated some act of signal revenge; and if he sighed at being obliged to represent his master, it was because he longed for Suleiman's death, to be master himself.

Achmet had for some time been waging war, in the pasha's name, with a new sect of heretics, sprung up in the deserts of Arabia, under the name of Wahabees. A short sketch of the origin and progress of these innovators may not be inapposite in this place.

The arid but extensive province of Nedjd, the inmost centre of Arabia, was not only the first cradle of Islamism, but the country where in after-ages the doctrine of Mohammed remained most exempt from adulteration. The roving children of Anahsse, of Kaïbar, and Taï, distantly dotted in small tribes over a wide and sterile surface, had but little communication with each other, and no intercourse with strangers. They were neither numerous nor stationary enough to breed any religious ferments in their own bosom, and they lived too far removed from all foreign influence to receive the infection of new and heretical doctrines from without. Their erratic life allowed neither time nor inclination to burthen with idle speculations and difficulties the simplicity of their original creed, nor to institute a cumbrous hierarchy and a complicated ritual. The text of the Prophet was their only rule, the surface of the desert their only temple, and the schaiçh or leader of each tribe its only imam or priest. Constant motion, to which the stream owes its limpidity, preserved the faith of the Arabs from alloy, and their practices from corruption:

they transmitted the Koran to their posterity, as they had received it from their ancestors, in all its primitive purity, unchanged by explanations, and unperverted by comments. It is true, that the very circumstance of their rejecting the distinctive forms of any mode of worship in particular, facilitated their assimilating with whatever sect they were led among, either by business or by pleasure. The casual ramification of Islamism, to whose shade the care of their flocks or the conduct of their caravans brought them nearest, was that under which they outwardly ranged themselves; and, Sunnees on the borders of the Turkish empire, they no sooner approached the vicinity of Persia than they became to appearance very notable Sheyees.

However great might be the abhorrence or contempt entertained for the absurd dogmas and superstitious practices superadded to the Koran, this feeling could only by the lonely inhabitant of the desert be cherished in the recesses of his own bosom. He neither had the means to collect his meditations into a regular code of doctrine, nor to preach them to other nations. But when these same opinions insensibly penetrated from the sterile plains of the Nedjd into the hilly and fertile districts of Ared, what among thinly-scattered tribes pitching their tents at random had remained mere vague insulated sentiments, amid a stationary population crowded in towns and villages became condensed into positive precepts, and a peculiar code which enabled its adherents distinctly to mark their scission from the rest of the Mohammedans.

And this happened towards the close of the seventeenth century. At that period the district of Ayani was ruled by a schaich of the name of Suleiman, descended from the same noble family of the Koreïsch—now reduced to a few obscure individuals—whence sprung the Prophet. This schaich derived a considerable income from the numerous herds of camels which he let out to the Indian Mohammedans who yearly disembarked at Katif, and traversed Ared in their way to Mekkah; but loaded with riches, he long remained unblest with progeny. In his old age, and when he no longer had any hopes of offspring, Heaven most unexpectedly bestowed on him a son.

Every species of prodigy is said to have announced and accompanied the birth of this high-fated child. A universal earthquake made every mosque that rests upon

the ground shake unto its foundations, and every minaret that shoots up in air topple on its base; and while during several successive nights cities, villages, castles, and fields shone with a supernatural and brilliant light, the lamps which burned in the sepulchral chapels of Mohammed and of the other saints of Islamism were dimmed and went out preternaturally, spite of imams and of snuffers; miracles so well attested, that no one can doubt them except determined unbelievers.

Abd-ool-wah-hab, or the slave of the Most High, was the name given to the infant for whom heaven seemed to reserve such lofty destinies. Sent to study the law in the most celebrated medresses of Damascus, the youth learned from the sturdiest Mohammedans themselves to attack the corruptions introduced into their creed. He no sooner returned to his home than he began publicly to preach the necessity of a thorough reformation.

His doctrine has been represented as pure deism; but nothing can be more erroneous. Abd-ool-wah-hab maintained not merely the divine origin of the Koran; he might even be said to enhance the importance of the sacred text, by asserting that alone it was able to supply all the spiritual wants of the faithful without any adventitious aid, and by divesting of the smallest remnant of authority every article of faith or rule of conduct since added to the book sent from heaven, either by the Prophet himself, or by any of the later doctors of Islamism; for while Abd-ool-wah-hab regarded the Koran as received directly from the Most High, he considered Mohammed its organ as only an ordinary mortal. Endowed, according to the new sectary, with no one superhuman attribute, no gift of miracles, no peculiar sanctity, this man, resembling other men, could not give a stamp of holiness even to such oral precepts distinct from the Koran as he himself spontaneously uttered; and if any worship addressed even to Mohammed was reprehensible in the eyes of Abd-ool-wah-hab, still infinitely more so was the least character of sanctity attached to other individuals—imams, doctors, or expounders of the law. Pilgrimages performed to peculiar tombs, virtue attributed to peculiar relics, were treated as rank idolatry; and the first pious performance enjoined the new proselytes, when they had acquired sufficient strength, was the destruction of the chapels of Mekkah and Medina, of Iman-Aly and Iman-Hussein, where Sunnees and Sheyees yearly unite in

devout orisons to the ashes of the pretended saints. Their dust was, like that of the desert, to be scattered in the wind; and the treasures which adorned their monuments were to reward the piety of their despoilers.

When about the middle of the eighteenth century Abdool-wah-hab, oppressed with years of renown and sanctity, was at length gathered unto his fathers, his son Mohammed, educated like himself in the study of the law, and consequently also distinguished by the title of Moollah, succeeded him as preacher of the new doctrine. Mohammed gave himself more wholly up to its internal light, since that from without penetrated not his eyes, struck from his childhood with incurable blindness. This circumstance, indeed, prevented him from leading out his proselytes himself in the wars for the defence or propagation of his new creed; but its irrefragable truth had already found a champion of the most martial description in Ibn-Sehood, the supreme ruler of Ared, who resided at Derayeh, and who became the temporal chief of the Wahabees, while Moollah Mohammed remained their spiritual leader.

From the moment that the new doctrine adopted by old-established princes became enabled to add the force of arms to that of arguments, it made rapid and extensive progress. Almost immediately on the promulgation of Wahabism, its more recent name had sanctioned the tenets already professed of old by the roving tribes of the desert; and soon after its establishment in the Ared, the stationary schaichs of the province of Kherdj enlisted under its banners. It now rapidly approached the Hedjas; and the shereef of Mekkah, the guardian of the kaaba, began to tremble for his power and for his dominions. Loudly inveighing against the apathy with which other states saw the danger approach them, he determined to avert it from the realms he ruled by promoting a powerful diversion.

To the eastward of the Nedjd extends the half-desert half-cultivated province of Hadjar, the ancient domain of the mighty tribe of Beni-Haled. One part of the year, Ibn-Arar, its chief, roves with his tents over the boundless plain; the other part he resides in El-Hassa the capital. This city once recognised the authority of the sultan, but has since been reclaimed by its Arab founders. Turkish fortifications, however, still surround its precincts, and Turkish families form a principal part of its

population. Its ayals or primates bore the Wahabees a peculiar hatred, both in their quality as Osmanlees and as Sunnees. The shereef of Mekkah found little difficulty in exciting them to hostilities against the spreading heretics. Arar took up arms, and marched to Derayah.

Already had internal anarchy and dissensions begun to shake to its foundations the new doctrine. Nothing, therefore, seems more probable than that, like many older heresies, that of the Wahabees would have blazed an instant in the district where it arose, and then have sunk again for ever into oblivion, had not the unseasonable interference of strangers providentially preserved it from the general fate it seemed destined to share. The danger which threatened the Wahabees from without forced them to stifle their internal feuds. They united for common defence and safety. Sehood, before harassed by continual murmurings and mutinies, now found his subjects all obedience and zeal; and after several years of warfare with Arar, instead of the children of Beni-Haled getting nearer Derayah, the sons of Wahab had sensibly approached El-Hassa.

As soon as Abd-ool-azeez, the son and successor of Ibn-Sehood, felt himself secure on the side of Hadjar, he turned his views towards Mekkah. Revenge as well as avarice animated him against its chief. But where all lived upon the holy things which he came to destroy, he found very few within the city disposed to second his attempts from without. It was only at the close of the third campaign that he got sight of the fortress of Tayif, situated on a high mountain at a small distance from Mekkah; and before he could lay siege to the place, the death of his spiritual partner, Moollah Mohammed—whose earthly career had extended to near a century—forced him, by the confusion it caused among his sectaries, to return to Derayah.

The shereef of Mekkah thought this the time for changing his defensive into an offensive war, and pursued the Wahabees into their own territory. There, however, rapidly facing about, these sectaries, with their strength now refreshed, so completely routed his harassed army, that he was hardly able in his flight to reach the gates of his capital.

The Porte now awoke from its trance, and began to feel some alarm at the progress of the Wahabees. The sultan directed the pasha of Bagdad to provide for the

defence of the holy city; and the pasha of Bagdad transmitted the sultan's instructions to his vassals, the Arab schaichs of Montefih and of Beni-Haled. Both prepared immediately to obey; but the schaich of Montefih was murdered by a disguised Wahabee in his own tent; and the schaich of Beni-Haled, after an unsuccessful campaign, saw El-Hassa his capital sacked by the victorious enemy, who took Sobier by storm, made Basra tremble, and threatened Meschid-Aly with annihilation.

Suleiman's kehaya at last himself determined to advance. In 1793, the year before my arrival at Bagdad, he had succeeded in making Abd-ool-azeez evacuate his new conquests, and return, though with immense plunder, to Derayah. Great consternation continued, nevertheless, to prevail at Bagdad; for the Wahab doctrine had now extended its sway to almost every part of Arabia north of Yemen, and had gained the very core of the tribe of Montefih itself, hitherto considered as the chief bulwark of the Othoman empire against the new sectaries. If is true, the Turkish mob tried to hush its fears by asking with a sneer what could be effected by an undisciplined rabble armed only with matchlocks, against regular armies and fortified places; but the shrewder part of the community felt that no temporary check could ensure a vast province vulnerable in every point, an empire tottering to its base, and a militia enervated by sloth and luxury, against a race of men with bodies of steel, with souls of fire, whose abode was the inaccessible heart of the desert, whose patience of fatigues, hardships, and privations exceeded all idea, as their rapidity of motion baffled all calculation; who, while they heeded not heat, or hunger, or thirst, appeared in the most sudden and unexpected manner on the points most distant from each other, and most unprepared for their reception; who, on the smallest reverse, always had their sands open behind them to retire to, beyond the reach of pursuit; whose obedience to their chiefs in whatever concerned the interests of their new creed knew no bounds; while their bravery in battle and their contempt of death were fed by a fanaticism far exceeding the long worn-out zeal of the Turks, and who in all their expeditions were equally animated by the interests of religion and by the hopes of plunder. Nay, timid men pretended, that in the very midst of Bagdad, in the broad face of day, Wahabees had been seen, scarcely disguised, to take note of the individuals, and to mark the

houses which their vengeance or their avarice had devoted to destruction.

Meanwhile Achmet-kehaya was preparing to employ the leisure which the temporary retreat of these sectaries had left him, in an expedition against the district of Kara-Djoolan, one of the fiefs of the pashalik of Bagdad. Its Coordish inhabitants had of their own authority appointed one of their countrymen as governor, and this new delegate was trying to obtain the pasha's confirmation by force of arms.

I offered to raise a corps of dellis for this expedition, and was accepted. Knowing despatch to be the soul of war, I did not in my recruits stickle much for age or size, and when my bairak* was complete, had the satisfaction of seeing it offer a most agreeable variety of ages and statures:—but what of that? courage was not measured by the inch, nor bravery estimated according to the colour of the beard. With my raw recruits I was ready for the kehaya long before he was ready for me.

Babel's ancient confusion of tongues still seems to prevail at Bagdad. Turks, Persians, Indians, Jews, Egyptians, Greeks, and Arabs were constantly vying, which, in their various dialects, should out-bawl the other. Among the motley group collected in the market-place, the fat paunch and ruddy face of Maalim Ibrahim often shone pre-eminent. Whenever he saw me he failed not to hail his old travelling companion; and one day that his mercantile transactions left him at leisure, he introduced the captain of dellis to some Ispahan merchants, who had left their country on the dissensions which followed the elevation of the eunuch Aga Mohammed. They were Sheyees, and certainly, in the eyes of a true Sunnee, a very abominable set of people; for not only did they maintain Aly to be first in rightful succession to Mohammed, and not Abou-bekr; but they made no scruple of carrying little paintings of pretty faces in their books of poetry. As well might they have had them in their Koran.

Notwithstanding such extreme relaxation of morals, I could not help thinking my Persians agreeable companions enough. It was long since I had met with men who occasionally sought relief from the drudgery of trade in the elegancies of literature. One of them, Abou-Reza,

* Bairak—Turkish standard, or regiment.

possessed a very pretty turn for poetry himself. His imagination, it is true, was not of that soaring order which, like the eagle, rises far above the surface of the earth, and embraces in its rapid glance the most distant similitudes which the wide expanse of the heavens affords. It rather resembled a playful butterfly which, hovering near the enamelled surface of the field, is content to sip, in gaudy attire, the honeyed cup of each humble daisy half-concealed among the herbage. He was happy in the art of seizing the *à-propos* of the moment, the flitting shadow of the insect, in its noonday flight; and his impromptu verses on the events of the day were, by his friends, extolled far above the productions of Hafeez and of Ferdousi—poets, as it was thought, grown somewhat musty with age. The most felicitous fits of inspiration used to seize him, when half a dozen of us were assembled in a little back-room, over a large bowl of a certain ruby-coloured liquor, whose fumes seem in all ages to have had the property of exciting the poetic fervour. It was then that his eyes began to sparkle, and his lips to pour forth almost involuntary effusions.

One evening Aboo-Reza looked so much more solemn than usual, that all wondered what monstrous mouse the mountain was going to produce. It kept us not long in suspense. Striking against the china vessel round which we were seated, for the purpose of enforcing silence,—“Mourn, Persia, mourn!” exclaimed our friend, in fine poetic phrensy:—“when the ancient gem of the empire, the primeval seat of the sovereign, the proud city of Ispahan, fell into solitude and ruin; when its crystal fountains only continued to play to the hooting owl, and its brilliant basins robed themselves in a veil of green slime; when the king of kings withdrew the radiance of his favour from the stately matron, and gave himself up to the warmer and more voluptuous concubine; when gay Sheeraz, crowned with crimson roses, flushed with sparkling wine, and pouring forth a fragrant breath, received him to her bosom; then began trouble and confusion to spread throughout the land; then burst open on all sides the floodgates of purple blood!—but when the whirlwind of war again tore up the blazing throne of the sofis, scarcely rooted in the south, and on its iron wings carried the fringed canopy of state to the frozen tracts of the north; when the gemmed carpet of the sovereign, erst sprinkled with fragrant flowers, was spread on sheets of ice, under

the benumbing shadow of frowning Demawend—then indeed did the genius of the chilling blast imprint on eternal snows the seal of Persia's ruin; then rushed forth to the destruction of Djemshid's tottering empire every demon of darkness, brought forth with frightful throes by the polar lightning; then—while ensanguined streams crimsoned heaven as well as earth—was heard among the Sun's orphan children no sound but the wail of sorrow and the cry of despair!"

Here Aboo-Reza stopped to enjoy our admiration, and to collect our applause: but our lips continued locked in silent wonder at the sublime thought of delivering the aurora borealis of a parcel of Russian soldiers—until in rushed, in actual tangible form, a grim-looking detachment of those of the pasha, to take us to prison, as conspirators against the state. The loudness of Aboo-Reza's voice, while reciting his effusion, had made this valiant troop—bent in quest of our party—stop at the door to listen; and the less its members had understood of the drift of the sonnet, the more they had considered it as an undeniable proof of the guilty purpose of our meeting. Nothing, they all swore, could be so evident as that the peak of Demawend meant the pasha's kehaya, in whose name they had come to confine us; and that we were the hurricane that would tear him up by the root, if not prevented in good time. This was effected by clapping us in prison, where we felt rather uncomfortable, notwithstanding Aboo-Reza tried to give us comfort, by assuring each of our party individually that, die when we might, he had all our epitaphs ready written in his pocket.

A descendant of one of the tribes of Israel was the secret instigator of this unmerited attack upon our liberties. Formerly chief of the customs at Basra, the Jew Abd-allah had been removed from that situation on some complaint of the English factory. He was since become at Bagdad not only the cashier, but the chief counsellor of the kehaya, whose financial operations he entirely managed. Achmet would sooner have affronted many a great man in office than his little Jew. Abd-allah, leaving his ancient wife with his own employment at Basra, had entirely new furnished his harem at Bagdad; and it was said that, in honour of the young spouse with whom he adorned his new establishment, he abstained three whole days from usury—the Sabbath, however, included. Little had this proof of love availed him. The

fascinating Sarah made but an inadequate return for such sacrifices; and while the husband passed his mornings with the kehaya, one or other of the kehaya's officers used to beguile the solitude of the wife. Anxious to get some money advanced me upon my bairak, I went several times to the seraff's. Sarah, from her grated balcony, espied my visits to her husband's serder, and seemed determined to console me for his backwardness. But as well might the fair Israelite have tried to communicate her new flame to a heap of ashes as to my worn-out heart. It was proof against all her attractions, natural and acquired.

Among Jews and among gentiles, in Scripture and in fable, in ancient times and in modern, it has been the invariable rule for ladies to accuse of too much warmth those in whom they found too little. Sarah departed not from the established rule. She represented me as having manifested a slight opinion of her virtue: and her husband was delighted to see its severity thus confirmed. He had heard of my nocturnal meetings with the Persian merchants. Forthwith he denounced us to the kehaya as guilty of treasonable practices; but, on an investigation, those of his wife alone came to light.

Our liberation followed speedily. The indignity of the imprisonment, however, rankled in my mind, and I swore to the kehaya an irreconcilable hatred. From different causes, many in Bagdad shared in this feeling; and a small knot of us, chiefly officers of the janissaries, never met without very freely expressing our resentment. One evening, in an armourer's shop where we used frequently to assemble, we by some chance began mimicking a Greek superstition. I knotted a handkerchief into a little puppet, christened it Achmet, and, after loading it with invectives, invited the party to plunge their swords into the little kehaya. Not until he was fairly demolished did we perceive—squatted in a dark corner of the shop—an Arab, who had been cheapening a lot of muskets. He seemed as little anxious to be noticed by us as we were pleased to discover him: but our conversation had been in Turkish, and we gave ourselves little concern about the impression it might make on a Bedoween.

A few evenings after this meeting, as I passed through a back street far away from my lodging, I saw myself

* Serder—reception room.

rather abruptly approached by a man enveloped in his abbah, who had been observing me for some time. I clapped my hand on my pistol: but the stranger, assuring me he came in peace, only begged a moment's audience in some place where no one might overhear us. I made a sign to him to walk on before me, and when we got to an open area, bade him stop at some distance, and disclose his mysterious business.

He first disclosed his person; opening his cloak, he asked whether I remembered him.

"You are," replied I, "the Arab of Montefih, whom we met the other evening in Feristah's shop."

"Not of Montefih, thank God!" cried the stranger, shaking his head; "not of that amphibious race, half Turk, half Arab, which pretends to respect the Bedoween, and yet pays tribute to the pasha. Mine is a purer blood, and a less corrupt creed. I am a son of Anahsse, and a follower of Wahab. Only to serve my faith do I stoop to wear the garb of my enemies; only to seek among my foes the weapons with which to slay them do I breathe their foul atmosphere. You think my mission dangerous. Know, that for one of us who falls in this task, fifty are found imploring to fill his place. We fear little on earth, whose wreath of glory is weaving in heaven! Your hatred to the kehaya is known to equal our own. Many a time have I stood unnoticed by your side, listening to your discourse, and watching your actions, when you dared to paint him in his true colours. Then join, if not our belief, at least our measures. We want not bravery nor zeal, but tactics and discipline. Such as bring among us military skill may expect the highest honours. Leisurely consult your feelings, and let me have your answer."

This answer I felt ready enough to give on the spot, provided I knew my friend commissioned to take it. I saw little prospect of advantage in staying at Bagdad, and I was inclined to try the Wahabees. All I required on the part of the Arab was a sight of his credentials. In proof of his mission, he took off his turban, and showed me his poll: it had not the lock of hair which other Mohammedans leave as a handle by which to be taken up to heaven. In further confirmation of his character, he pulled out of his bosom the signet of his leader; and as a third testimonial, he offered to introduce me to a conventicle of Arabs and others, friendly to his sect, who

would vouch for his veracity. This party I saw, and was satisfied. Determining upon the journey, I received the seal of the fraternity, and settled the day on which I was to be furnished with the letters and other instruments which the Arab purposed to commit to my care.

As I went home, I met one of those Tartar messengers of the pasha who, like Maallim Moorsa, spend their lives on the road; but only carrying words instead of wares, fly like lightning where the merchants creep like slugs. This man, Feizullah by name, had served the capitan-pasha during his short vizirate. I had known him on the banks of the Danube, and had done him some service, which he now took the opportunity of repaying on those of the Tigris. "I was on the watch for you," cried he, as soon as he saw me. "What you may have done I know not, but what will be done to you if you stay I can pretty well guess. In a long conference between the kehaya and the janissary-aga, of which I caught a few words, your name was so frequently mentioned, and so angrily blended with the terms of conspiracy, secret meetings, and Wahabees, that I slipped out ere I got my message, to warn you not to stay till I receive it. As you value your life, leave Bagdad immediately.—Ishallah,* you will be safe among the robbers of the desert.

On uttering these last words, my informer was already out of sight. I ran not after him for further particulars. A month's pay of my troop, just received, was still in my pocket; and purposing within the hour to review my noble dellis, I had ordered my horse round to a particular spot. Nothing remained for me to do but to hie me thither, and vault into my saddle. Bidding a mental adieu to my corps, which was actually waiting for me under arms, I borrowed its pay for my travelling expenses, clapped spurs to my steed, got out of the city by a circuitous route, overset a long file of barbers going in procession to the tomb of their patron the Prophet's barber, at Madain, crossed the bridge, traversed the suburbs, and reaching the outer gate, took the road to Hillah.

Divided in two by the Euphrates, and encompassed by delightful gardens, that city might, after a fatiguing journey, have tempted a less hurried traveller to repose; but I feared its constant intercourse with Bagdad, and pushed on to Kefil, where I stopped a few hours. Re-

* Ishallah—please God!

freshed by my halt, I left the burying-place of the prophet Ezechiel to go to that of the nephew of Mohammed. A wide desert intervenes between the two sanctuaries, and few were the thanks I gave the pious souls who, in the burning sands that lie between them, have built fifty houses of prayer, and not one place of rest. My lassitude at last grew so extreme as to throw me into utter despair: for my faithful courser—till then wont to ride as on the wind, and scarce to leave the print of his hoof in the wavy sands—seemed still more worn out than myself, was scarcely able to set one foot before the other, and ready, at every step, to drop down from sheer fatigue: yet I made him toil on, much as it grieved me, lest I should be benighted where we must both have perished from absolute want. At last, after several more hours of a slow and painful progress, during which I frequently was tempted to lie down and breathe my last on the spot, I began to discern a luminous speck in the horizon, as if kindled all at once by some fairy torch. It looked from the boundless plain like a beacon descried at night on the wide ocean. Yet was it not a blazing fire, nor yet a twinkling star. It was the gilt cupola of the tomb of Aly, reflecting from its burnished surface the last rays of the setting sun. Its splendour, gleaming far in the desert, and marking amid dreary solitudes the busy haunts of man, restored gladness to my drooping soul. I knew I saw the spot, however distant, which was to end my labours. Even my horse caught the influence. He shook his mane, pricked up his ears, snorted, and directing his wide-expanded nostril to whence seemed to blow the fair promise of relief, made fresh efforts to reach the wished-for goal. I patted him on the neck in gratitude, and during the remainder of the journey kept my eye steadily riveted on the blazing dome as on my polar star. Anxiously I watched its increase, in order to judge of the lessening distance; but much time still elapsed, and many a wearisome step was still performed, and complete darkness overcast the lonely scene around me ere I drew sensibly near the end of my journey. Nor did I quit the dismal mounds of barren sands which on all sides encompassed my scarce perceptible path, until at the very gates of the town. When, indeed, in the uncertainty how much farther I still might have to crawl, I saw the battlements over the pointed arch rise all at once before me, at the small distance of

scarcely fifty yards, I gave a scream of joy; and when I passed under the sounding vault, dark and gloomy as it looked, I felt as if entering the portals of paradise.

Arrived at the khan, my first care was directed to the faithful companion of my toil. I myself led my weary steed to the stall, and with one hand I stroked his panting loins in thanks for his services; while with the other I offered him his dearly-earned repast.* Alas! he would not touch his food, turned away from his drink, and lying down on the ground, thrust his head between his legs, cast on me his keen full eye, and seized with a convulsive shivering, fell on his side, and died.

Oh my noble, my beloved steed! who bore me through so many toils, and saved me from so many dangers; who with such gentleness combined such fire; whose mettle my voice ever could raise or could repress at will—were then your unslackening efforts to save my life to cost your own! Had I been Sultan Mahmoud I would have raised a monument over your body; an Alexander, I would have built a city to your memory: Anastasius could only give you his tears!

I looked about to replace my loss. An Arab brought me a horse, of whose high pedigree he exhibited the most splendid testimonials. I thought it prudent to inquire into the character of the seller himself. He had occasionally stopped travellers on the road, and he might, in ordinary matters, be a little addicted to lying as well as to thieving; but in an affair in which his honour stood so materially committed as in the present, he was above suspicion. Sooner would he spill the blood of his father than falsely warrant that of his horse. All his certificates were authenticated: I made the purchase I could not avoid; ate my supper, and having bestowed on the kehaya a few hearty curses, lay down and soon fell asleep.

CHAPTER XII.

EARLIER in the morning than a man might have preferred who had gone late to rest, I was awaked by a prodigious clamour. At first I thought Meschid-Aly on fire; then, invaded by the Wahabees: but on rising, found the noise only proceeded from a few Sunnees and Sheyees, assembled round the tomb of the saint to whom the place is consecrated, and engaged in a trial of lungs—each sect endeavouring in its orisons to out-bawl the other. Meschid-Aly belongs to the Sunnee inhabitants, but derives its chief support from Sheyee pilgrims. Within its precincts, therefore, neither persuasion dares to insult the other more grievously than by invoking with all its might its own peculiar patron: and the Sunnees cry out Omar! and the Sheyees bawl out Aly! until want of voice reduces both alike to silence.

Among the other strange faces, attracted like my own by the clamour, I espied some which I was quite sure I had left at Bagdad. This discovery made me resolve entirely to quit the jurisdiction of Suleiman, for the scarcely less extended, though somewhat less definite, domain of the powerful Arab schaich of Montefih, whose authority extends far along the banks of the Phrat and of the Schat-el-Arab. I therefore crossed the city, and again plunged into the desert.

Winding round the western extremity of the dry basin of Nedgef, I insensibly advanced in the lonely waste, without precisely knowing whither in the first instance I was going, but intending by degrees to work my way from one lesser kabilé* or tribe to another, until I should reach the domain of the Wahabees, the final object of my journey. An old abbah covered my Turkish dress; a sack of rice on one side, and a cruise of water on the other, were suspended from my saddle; and thus carrying my bed and board, and at liberty to spread my table and couch wherever I pleased under the canopy of heaven, I trusted for the remainder to my pistols and to Providence, not doubting that I should soon reach some Bedo-

* Kabilé—small Arab tribe, subordinate to a larger.

ween camp where I might claim hospitality and protection.

Meantime, beginning to feel entirely out of reach of my enemies, I experienced a lightness of heart and a freedom of breathing to which I had for some time been a stranger. It was rapture to me to roam at liberty through a plain without visible boundary, as over a vast trackless sea, where I might steer my course in any direction, or make for any point I chose, unchecked by fence, unimpeded by hindrance of any sort, and only guided while the day lasted by the course of the sun, and when the dusk came on by the glittering constellations which seemed to succeed to his glorious employment.

"Here," thought I, "ends the domain of civilized man; of that man whose greater polish of surface only conceals greater hardness of heart, and who only receives a smoother edge to inflict deeper wounds. Here gilded daggers, silken bowstrings, and honeyed poisons no longer dance around my steps; here the name of a sultan ceases to sanction measures which his mind never conceived, and the shadow of a vizier to smite men whom his own arm cannot reach; here no one obeys a sovereign he never saw, or is bound by laws he never heard of; here man will give, and woman will deny; here no walls are raised to keep travellers out, nor are tolls demanded for letting them in; no one here legally detains the property of the stranger, nor churlishly avoids his person; here I may consider all things my eyes embrace as my own; and in a succession of short, easy saunters, roam free as air unto my journey's end!"

At this period of my revery out started from behind a little knoll a fierce-looking Bedoween, who, couching his lance against my breast, haughtily bade me stop. This was unexpected, and disagreeably interrupted my exultation at my newly-acquired freedom of motion. The Arab pointed to a small group of goatskin tents which I had taken for low mounds of earth, as to the place where I must go whether I chose or not, and give an account of my views and proceedings. Seeing my opponent thus strongly backed, I thought it as well for the present to waive my privilege of unrestrained liberty, and to make a friend of him ere he had leisure to treat me as an enemy. I therefore jumped off my horse, flung my pistols to the ground, and, calling myself his guest, laid hold of his girdle. Disarmed by this act of submission, he changed

his threatening tone into milder language, bade me welcome, and offered to conduct me to the schaiçh. So rapid, indeed, was in his breast the transition from hostile to hospitable feelings, that he insisted by the way on his right to entertain me himself, in consequence of having been the first of his troop to see me; and could only be diverted from his purpose by my stating that I had special business with the chief.

At the entrance of the most roomy tent in the camp sat on his wicker stool, surrounded by a number of naked children squatted on the ground before him, this eminent personage. Engaged in the homely occupation of teaching a favourite grandson to hurl the hollow reed in imitation of the heavier spear—as yet too unwieldy for his infant arm—the countenance of the sire seemed to radiate with rapturous delight at the feats of his anxious pupil; and his coal-black eye, still sparkling with the fire of youth, shone the brighter from its contrast with the snow-white beard which marked his advanced age. On seeing me unexpectedly stand before him, he gave a start of surprise; but soon recovering from it, and seeming slightly to blush for its manifestation, he politely returned my salute; and when, having stated my wish to pass the night in his camp, I claimed his protection as a defenceless wanderer, my request was immediately granted with the utmost courtesy. The schaiçh's kindness stopped not here. Calling out to a female occupied in the right-hand division of the tent, and whose exterior, as she peeped from under the carpet which concealed her employment, seemed the least of her merits,—“Achshid,” cried he, “a stranger is come to us; make haste and bake some bread.” To which injunction, the diligent Achshid replied in terms expressive of her readiness. “This beginning,” said I to myself, “augurs well; bread once broken with my host, I am safe under his roof.”

A few minutes sufficed for the diligent housewife to produce her handiwork in the shape of large flat cakes, with the distinctive mark of her own palm left impressed upon the middle. These, with some sour camel's milk and other equally primitive dainties, were set out before me, and I fell to. Soon seeing me sated, “Now go to repose,” said the schaiçh; “when rested, I no longer shall hesitate to ask you who you are, whence come, and whither going!” This respite gave me pleasure. I made myself a bolster of a dromedary's pillion, and, lying down, soon fell asleep.

On again awaking, the stars already twinkled in the firmament; so likewise in their sockets did the inquisitive eyes of a dozen of the notables of the tribe, ranged in a circle round the schaich to hear my story. I took my seat beside them, and expressed my readiness to be questioned. The answers remained in my own hands. I knew little yet whom I was among, and I neither wished to own that I ran away from Suleiman, nor that I was going to join Abd-ool-azeez. "I am a Turkish officer," said I; "I come from Bagdad, and wish to go to El-Hassa."

This seemed to surprise the party. "Stranger," cried a little shrivelled old man, with a shrewd, distrustful countenance, and a harsh, grating voice, seated in a corner, "tell us, pray, what particular motive can induce you, thus alone as you are, to prefer the dangerous and difficult road of the desert to the easy way by Basra, Sobier, Graïn, and Katif, which, in eighteen or twenty days at most, would be sure to bring you to your destination?"

The observation had a something so just and pertinent in it as to be rather appalling. "I am a lover of difficulties," said I, laughing; "my soul contracts a rust in ease; a few rubs serve to keep it bright. Besides, I wished for an opportunity of paying homage to the virtues of the Bedoweens."

The party were too civil to tell me to my face they believed this whole flourish a lie; but I read it in their looks. They said "they hoped my difficulties might not exceed my wishes, and that their virtues might answer my expectations;" whereupon, the night advancing, they took their leaves, and went to their respective homes.

As soon as I remained alone with my host, "Osmanlee," cried he, in an earnest tone, "you conceal your true design; and yet, why should you? By giving us your confidence you would secure our good offices. Believe me, it is not from frivolous curiosity I speak; Schaich Mansoor wants not topics for idle talk. Your own welfare makes me anxious that those who have just left us, teeming with perhaps unfounded suspicions, should be induced willingly to assist a helpless stranger, rather than led to thwart his views from mere ignorance of their nature. If, however, the subject be distressing to your feelings, remain silent. I urge you no farther."

There was in the tone as well as in the matter of this speech a something not only so earnest, but so affection-

ate as half to unlock my heart. "Mansoor," said I, "a soldier in Roum, I fought the sultan's battles in the name of the Prophet; I came to Bagdad's pasha neither wholly destitute of rank nor of renown; yet I was slighted, or if noticed at all it was by a proud kehaya, only to have snares laid against my life. From these I fly; from these I seek shelter in the depths of the desert."

"And of this," cried Mansoor, "you feared to apprise me? How unjustly! If the supreme chief, the kbir of Montefih himself, the daring Hameed—vulnerable as he is on the side where his peasantry or his flocks penetrate within the pale of Turkestan—yet only pays Suleiman an unwilling allegiance; can you suppose that the lesser schaichs of his house, roaming so much deeper in the desert, should feel desirous to espouse the resentment, just or unjust, of every creature of the sultan? Ah! so far from this being the case, rest assured, that if as a mere stranger we greet you with good-will, as a sufferer by Achmet you may command our utmost services. The only risk you might run would be that of our suspecting a better understanding to exist between you and the kehaya than you avow, and the grievance you talk of to be only a feint, through means of which to draw out and to discover our secret sentiments. I still remember too well how Achmet, by calumniating me and my neighbour Beni-Tamim to each other, was near making the friends, the brothers of early youth, offer each other in old age the cup of perdition. But even with this example imprinted on my mind, my heart rejects such a thought; and you shall witness that we pay Suleiman the tribute of our herds, not of our feelings."

"But why," said I, interrupting the schaich's harangue, "with such proofs of treachery on the part of the sultan's delegates, not prefer the security of an open rupture to the dangers of a secret enmity? Why not renounce at once all allegiance to Suleiman?"

"Ah!" replied Mansoor, "fate forbids my numbering myself among those chiefs so entirely beyond the pasha's grasp as to have nothing whatever to fear from his resentment. My subjects live not all yet in the portable tent; move not all yet from place to place free and unconstrained as the antelope. Many of my vassals, fixed by the attraction of a richer soil, have driven deep in the ground the stakes on which rest their stationary huts, and, like plants, adhere to the clod of earth which their

habitations compass. I myself, permitted for nine months of the year to forget that Suleiman exists, am obliged annually, during the three moons employed in collecting the contributions on my tenantry within his jurisdiction, to refresh my remembrance of his being, and to pay him my tithe of the moneys I collect, and of the homage I receive."

At the thoughts of these periodically returning burthens of vassalage, a cloud seemed to overcast the schaich's countenance. Its serenity, however, soon returned, as, resuming his discourse, he added, with increased animation, "But I too, with my liability to incur wounds, possess my power to sting. Not only for every injury done to my few stationary tenants can I retaliate tenfold on the pasha's wholly immoveable population: I can refuse the escorts and the beasts of burthen wanted for the conveyance of his goods and the safety of his pilgrims: I can, if his troops, weighed down with their arms, should venture into the desert, leave my battles to be fought by thirst and famine, by the stifling sands, and by the fearful simoom; I can commit to the power of the elements the protection of Mansoor: therefore, stranger, since I now know who you are, rest secure; and may soft slumbers keep locked your eyelids the remainder of this night! To-morrow, in honour of your coming, shall fall the fatted sheep."

There was nothing in this conversation with Mansoor calculated to disturb the repose to which I soon retired; accordingly, it lasted, as little interrupted by irksome waking thoughts as by troublesome dreams, until broad daylight. My first care on getting up was to edify my host by the unction of my morning prayer; my next business to renew the evening's talk. I wanted to bring him on the subject of the Wahabees. At first he rather hung back—apprehensive, no doubt, of committing himself: but the respectful terms in which I at all hazards mentioned the new sect induced him at last to become more unreserved.

"Removed," said he, "as I am from the Ared, and on the borders of Irak, any avowed union with the sons of Wahab would, in the present stage of their progress, be of little advantage to them, and of certain detriment to myself. It must draw upon my head the wrath of Suleiman, without ensuring me the support of Abd-ool-azeez. Besides, a man of my years wants repose during the few

days God still grants him to live—were it only to prepare for death; and when the domain of the Wahabees shall have approached nearer to us, and shall see the authority of a father at rest devolved to my children, these may, if they think the measure expedient, join more openly the standard of the new sectaries: but though a Sunnee in name, my religious sentiments have, in reality, always differed little from those of Abd-ool-Wahab. Bigotry, therefore, raises not its insuperable barrier between me and his followers, and when all other barriers shall fall, and the opposite floods come near, they must of their own accord run into each other.”

The only thing which, after this candid confession of Mansoor's sentiments, still restrained me from disclosing all my own designs, was the presence of his youngest child—a boy of ten or twelve years of age, who, standing by the side of his father, and alternately fixing his keen eye on whichever of us spoke, seemed with outstretched ears to catch our words almost ere they fell from our lips, and imbibed them as the thirsting plant drinks the summer dews. “Might it not be well,” whispered I, therefore, to the schaiich, “to send to his sports this lad, whose lips move not, but whose mind devours all we say?”

“Does it?” cried Mansoor; “Ah, then, by all means let him stay: let him attend to the converse of men, that by so doing he may learn to become one! Fear not his indiscretion: he has left the women's chamber; like ourselves he has learned to fetter his tongue.” On such a commendation from his parent, a Greek boy would have spoken to assure me of his silence; the young Arab only looked his delight in the bright glow which suffused his downy cheek.

I now freely confessed to Mansoor that my destination was Derayah. “My acquaintance with the plans and resources of the government of Bagdad,” said I, “might be useful, and my wish to see them marred must at all events be acceptable.”

Hereupon Mansoor ruminated a little:—at last, “Since such is your design,” cried he, “I think I may do a thing which will forward it, and be of advantage to both. For some time past I have been thinking of sending Abd-ool-azeez a token of good-will. I shall avail myself of this opportunity. The bearers of my offerings may be your guides and escorts, and you the bearer of my assurance of peace and amity.”

This mission I most gladly accepted; and the preparations were immediately begun. The difficulty lay not in mustering the gifts:—they had been long collected for the purpose. The most prominent consisted of two handsome blood mares, “able,” observed Mansoor, “to fly without wings;” an abbah tissue with gold; some rich Damascus blades, and some choice Persian stuffs from the markets of Bagdad and Basra: but the spoke in the wheel seemed to be the letter which was to accompany these presents. Mansoor’s secretary was become a recording angel in the regions above! Mansoor himself never had shone as a penman; and as to his vassals at present in the camp, they were more remarkable for wielding the knotty reed whose point is steeped in blood, than the smoother tube whose end is dipped in ink. My whole embassy was on the point of falling to the ground for want of a scribe.

In this dilemma I bethought myself of my own *savoir-faire*. It is true, it extended not in Eastern characters beyond the most ordinary Nesh-khi sort. For want, however, of a more skilful hand, I offered mine, such as it was; not indeed to write in Arabic;—that was out of all question:—but to indite an epistle in Turkish.

After a little hesitation my services were accepted. I was told the substance of what I was to pen, and left to give it my own form. For this purpose I retired to the most secluded corner of the tent, and sat down to my work. Alas! I soon felt, that neither materials for writing nor leisure to meditate could carry me through with the task I had so incautiously undertaken. I sat poring on my endless sheet of paper, like a schoolboy at his theme, biting my nails, and not knowing what to write. At last a bright thought came to my relief. “Why not, where my Turkish lore failed me, eke it out with Greek, and conceal the scantiness of the substance under the exuberance of the ornament?”

By this expedient I at last completed my manuscript, and brought it to the schaiçh. He looked it over with an air of astonishment. “I do not,” said he—twirling his turban round and round on his head, and straining his eyes to make out a sentence—“pretend to be conversant in Turkish writing; but I sometimes have seen the penmanship of the divan, and certainly it never looked like this!”

“No more it could,” boldly answered I. “People in

the north are constantly changing their fashions. They now think it graceful in the Othoman chancery to combine the Greek characters with the Persian phraseology. But if this new mode displeases you—give back the letter, and let me tear it!”

“No, no,” earnestly cried the old schaiçh, holding my hand from executing the sentence. “It has already cost us trouble enough. If it should not be very intelligible, Allah-Akbar: God is great! my presents will explain its meaning.” So saying, he dipped his seal in the ink, and impressed it on the paper. It was then rolled up, enclosed in a case sewed by Achshid’s own henna-tipped fingers, and handed over to my care.

Meantime, the fatted sheep was already smoking in the platter. Invited to the feast, all the chiefs of the camp flocked to the schaiçh’s tent. An inferior sort of self-invited guests followed. None were refused that came; and each sating his appetite in the order of his arrival, and then retiring to make room for others, the tide of comers and goers only ceased when the carcass was stripped to the bone.

Now commenced the bustle of my departure. In order to elude the hawk’s eye of the roving freebooter, I enveloped my Greek features after the country fashion in a striped handkerchief, a gift of the fair Achshid. The horses were led out, and the guides sallied forth.

“These trusty servants,” cried Mansoor, “will take you the shortest and safest road to my neighbour, the schaiçh (I think he said) of Schoreïfath. Coming, as you do, from me, he will receive you well, and when you leave him will give you a fresh escort. From camp to camp you thus finally will reach Derayeh. Here and there, however, you will find perilous passes. All the kabiles are not equally friendly: some might be named with whom meeting is fighting; and lately the combats have been so sanguinary, that the private vengeance to be sated on both sides leaves little hopes of a reconciliation. Mind, therefore, every where to inquire, and always to be prepared both for defence and flight. But on this subject my friend Nasser, more advanced in the desert than your servant, will give you more pointed directions.” Then taking me aside, and charging me to inform Abd-ool-azeez how well disposed he was to his cause, but how ill situated to show that disposition except by his backwardness in assisting Sulciman, the schaiçh

held the stirrup for me to mount, and bade me farewell. I set forward just as the sun dropped behind the horizon, and followed by the Arabs, the led mares, and the camels which carried the presents, slowly proceeded on.

The month of March was just opening, and the heat, save only at midday, still easily borne. The verdant carpet of the desert, bruised by the horses' hoofs, emitted at night its most aromatic exhalations; and the plants and shrubs in full bloom sent forth invisible clouds of the most powerful perfumes. In the morning, scarlet anemones and purple ranunculuses were seen to enamel the blushing plain unto the utmost range of the eye; inso-much, that the rosy tint of the dawn only seemed their fainter reflection cast upon the blue sky. Every where our cattle found abundant pasture, and our own appetite feasted on milk of an ambrosial flavour.

Two short days' journey and a half, unclouded by any danger or molestation, took us to Nasser's camp. It is true, that now and then, like a single fleece in the azure sky, appeared far off on the desert some solitary Bedoween, seeming to rove in quest of plunder: but none came within hearing distance, except one small party; and this, the moment it recognised the Arabs of Schaich Mansoor, again quietly walked off, and vanished in the horizon.

The same hospitality which had marked the reception of Mansoor shone pre-eminent in that of Nasser. In him I even found, with less loquacity, a more ready frankness. All within and around him savoured stronger of the freedom of the desert. The wife of Mansoor had only suffered herself to be perceived; the consort of Nasser came forth, and met our gaze without scruple. Not only she permitted me to see her features unveiled, but she very minutely scrutinized my own. A native of the west was, I suppose, a novel sight to the lady: for my person and my attire seemed equally to attract her attention. Indeed, her investigations became by degrees so close, that, to my great satisfaction, her husband thought fit at last to interfere. I must otherwise have been, by little and little, completely undressed. Even after she had been compelled reluctantly to retire, I heard the fair Farsané (or whatever was her name) loudly complain to her sympathizing maids of the cheek offered by her husband to her inquisitive spirit.

The individual of our embassy on whose powers of

persuasion with Abd-ool-azeez Mansoor seemed to have most relied—namely, the finest of the blood mares sent him as a present—on this halt happened to evince her irresistibility in a less desirable quarter; not indeed from any fickleness of disposition in the poor beast herself, nor for want of proper care in her keeper; since, of the chain of which one end confined her legs at night, the other was wrapped round the body of her guide, whenever he lay down to sleep, insomuch that no beauty in a harem could be more strictly watched. Yet had a dexterous thief nearly succeeded in cutting her fetters asunder with a file, when the groom, awakened by the noise, caught the robber in the fact. A sound beating was immediately inflicted upon the culprit—intended to extort from him a renunciation of the right he possessed of naming a protector in the camp: but while the more wary natives kept aloof during the operation, I must heedlessly thrust in my person—and accordingly was caught. In the midst of the correction he was suffering, the robber contrived to fling his scull-cap at my unguarded head, so dexterously, that, touched by the insidious implement, I became bound in honour to pay the scoundrel's ransom, and to obtain his release: but, in return for this good office, I had the satisfaction to hear him recount in the utmost detail all his former predatory exploits as honourable achievements, and to witness the respect they inspired for his person. In short, if I had paid dearly, it was to liberate a hero, whose only loss in the affair consisted in having to return to his own camp as he had come from it, on his own legs. In the desert, a man's thefts are only called his gain.

When, after this little episode which I could have dispensed with, I too disposed myself to leave Nasser's tribe, the chief pressed me to stay with that blended warmth and discretion, which left me an entire liberty to accept or to refuse. Indeed, combining with the energy of the desert all the politeness of the courtier, the schaich was like a rock covered with flowers. Seeing me determined to proceed, he gave me all the assistance in his power, and advised me, by means of a little circuit, to avoid his next neighbour, with whom he was on indifferent terms; then having supplied me with a double provision of rice and dates, and with an increased escort, he wished me a prosperous journey, and tarried at the entrance of his tent while I remained in sight.

For the purpose of eluding as much as possible all observation, I now only travelled at night. Before the dawn I sought some hollow in the plain, in which lay concealed the body of the caravan, while on its outskirts one single Arab kept watch, stretched out on the ground. Thus, making way but slowly, we took five days to reach the encampment of Schaich Amroo, chief of a tribe bound by the strongest ties of reciprocal services to that of Nasser. With him, however, I staid but half a day.

On my next march, we took such exceeding precautions to avoid a particular horde against which I had been cautioned, that we walked right into the midst of it. The encampment had moved from the spot which it was supposed to occupy ; and, thanks to our cunning zigzags, we fell in with the troop just where we thought ourselves most completely out of its reach. Its vanguard, however, contented itself with demanding, in the name of the chief, a considerable sum for letting us pass. "You escort strangers," added the spokesman, "whom we distrust, and you carry goods which owe us a toll." This observation suggested to me the idea of trying the virtue of my cipher received at Bagdad. "Let the chief himself," cried I, "come forward and state his claims." This he presently did. Taking him by the wrist, I whispered in his ear the Wahab watchword, and showed him the signet. At this sight he looked scared, for some time darted his eyes in silence on the instrument as on a talisman which kept his limbs and features spellbound, and then waving his hand, "Pass on," he cried in surly disappointment,—and immediately fell away behind his wondering attendants.

This incident greatly enhanced my importance among my own troop. Mansoor's Arabs now saw very clearly that I was some great personage, respected even in the heart of the desert ; and they paid me additional deference. It went not, however, so far as to agree with me in an unqualified reprobation of the fines levied by the Bedoween on the passenger. "What the last schaich we fell in with had attempted was certainly very wrong, but what they themselves did was perfectly right. Because people allowed themselves the free range of their own premises, were they to lose the right of keeping out strangers ? When the incautious traveller neglected to make his bargain, to be sure he was mulcted ; sometimes even he was stripped to the skin : but what then ? were

not they the descendants of Ismaïl? Had not Ismaïl been unjustly disinherited by Ibrahim his father, and had not the posterity of Ismaïl an undoubted right to seize upon its lawful inheritance, in whatever hands it might have fallen?" I attempted not to combat this argument. All I did was inwardly to pray that I might meet as few as possible of these disinherited children.

The remainder of the journey only offered a tiresome repetition of fatiguing marches and of tedious halts: of wells missed in one place and found filled up in another; of skirmishes and of flights. Our reception in the different camps varied throughout every intermediate degree between the most cordial friendship and positive fighting: and so uninterrupted was the succession of expostulations, of threats, and of protestations, that, ere we had achieved half the way, my voice became almost extinct, and I had to argue in complete dumb show. Every tribe in whose vicinity we came supplied our caravan with some new member, glad of the opportunity to reach, under our protection, some neighbouring district, and as those who joined us constantly exceeded in number those that fell off, our troop at last grew formidable enough to awe an enemy of moderate strength. This was fortunate; for the further we advanced, the greater became the concupiscence excited by Mansoor's mares. Every Arab on the road would gladly have given for them wife, children, and friends.

Before the end of the journey, we had to encounter an enemy more formidable than any Arab tribe, not excepting the most savage of the desert. I mean the dread Samiel. Our caravan was slowly pacing through the boundless plain—the horses' steps sounding more hollow than usual on the earth, and a more awful stillness reigning in the atmosphere. Suddenly a lurid glare overspread the eastern extremity of the horizon, while a thick sulphureous mist arose from the ground, which—first revolving round and round in rapid eddies—next mounted up to the sky, and finally overcast with threatening darkness the whole heavenly vault. At these terrific symptoms our Arabs turned pale, and goaded on our cattle with headlong hurry—in order, if possible, still to outrun the baleful blast. But in vain! Hoarsely murmuring, the hot stream swept the ground with frightful speed, and, much as we might quicken our pace, gained fast upon us. Perceiving themselves encompassed on all sides by its

fiery breath, our people shrieked with terror, our very cattle howled with instinctive anguish, and all that had life fell flat on the ground, burying nose and mouth deep in the shifting sands—in hopes that the envenomed current, gliding over the prostrate limbs, might not penetrate into the vitals.

Near half an hour did the raging hurricane keep us thus riveted to the ground, without daring to move, or to speak, or scarce to draw breath, and soon entirely covered us with a fine impalpable dust, which not only found its way into every fold of our garments, but, as we afterward found, into every inmost recess of our boxes and luggage—when at last our beasts of burden, as if awaking out of a profound trance, began to shake themselves, and, by all again of one accord rising upon their legs, gave the signal that the danger was past. Every creature now stood up that was able, and thanked Providence for his escape. Only one member of the caravan, a foreign merchant—too tardy perhaps in prostrating himself before an unknown enemy—rose no more. On approaching, we already found him breathless, and weltering in the thick black blood that gushed in streams from his nose, mouth, and ears. My guides lost no time in committing his corrupt mass to the earth, ere the limbs should detach themselves from the swelling trunk: then heaped some stones over the spot, to protect it from the insults of the ounce and jackal; and—these short rites and simple monument completed—again proceeded onwards.

This catastrophe closed the adventures of the desert. Soon after we began to descry before us, like a cloud of more benign and promising aspect, the distant mountains of the Nedjd and the domain of the Wahabees; and with rapturous delight our long procession by degrees penetrated into verdant valleys filled with date and lemontrees, intermixed with towns and villages. After resting at Ramah, at Makren, and in other places equally inviting by their situation and their produce, we at last reached Derayah the capital.

CHAPTER XIII.

No sooner had my person and Mansoor's presents been made fit to offer themselves before Abd-ool-azeez, than I requested an audience in all due form. This was immediately granted. It took place in the open air, at the gates of what I must needs call—more from the dignity of its tenant than its own—a palace; and the schaich received me squatted on a rush mat. Notwithstanding his advanced age of seventy-five, he still displayed good features, and a handsome though somewhat harsh and forbidding countenance, and through all the affected meanness of his dress shone a lofty and commanding air. I felt a sensation of awkwardness at the richness of my own apparel, so much exceeding that of the high personage whose favour I came to seek. On this subject, however, I might have spared myself any uneasiness. The schaich seemed to contemplate my glitter—if noticed by him at all—with perfect indifference; and when I presented to him the gifts of Mansoor, he cast upon them the careless survey of a man who considers such things as beneath his attention. The letter certainly puzzled him. He seemed to feel as if it ought not, and he saved himself, by his supercilious glance, the embarrassment of owning that he knew not what to make of it. When at the conclusion of my harangue I repeated to him the sentence, and showed the signet imparted to me by his emissary at Bagdad, his brow unfurled, and his features relaxed into a more affable expression. Still he remained, after I had done, a few moments musing and silent. At last, "Stranger," said he, in a slow and deliberate manner, "wonder not if an old warrior, accustomed to treachery and deceit, should not feel immediate confidence in Mansoor's protestations. If the light of truth has really penetrated his heart, the Lord be thanked, especially by himself, who must be the greatest gainer, since the choicest blessings of heaven, both here and hereafter, never fail to reward sincere conversion; but I know the faith of Turks, and I distrust the very Arab whose breath mingles often with theirs. Mansoor's artful conduct may have deceived you, and it is only on

trial that I shall think myself secure of his sincerity. 'The decisive hour,' added he, suddenly starting up from his seat, "is perhaps not far off, when all who appear not for us shall be treated as if they had been against us. The spears already are pointing, and, at a distance which no other eye can reach, I already perceive the war-dust rising. As to you, stay among us; in the midst of my own children no treachery can reach me, and I shall have pleasure in trying your talents."

I expressed my thanks; and fancying that the schaiçh, during our conversation, had eyed my pistols with peculiar complacency, resolved upon the sacrifice to conciliate his good-will. Arabs, of all ages, like children, always think most desirable the thing that is withheld from them; whence Abd-ool-azeez showed himself much more gratified with my pair of pistols than with all the rich presents of Mansoor. He immediately directed that my expenses should be defrayed, and, recommending his new guest to the care of his attendants, mounted his horse and rode off, followed by a numerous and motley suite.

Scarcely had he proceeded a dozen yards, when, just at the turning of the street, he was met by a young man also on horseback, arriving from the country, and, like himself, attended by a considerable retinue. The opinion which the air of the stranger made me conceive of his importance was fully confirmed by the reception which the schaiçh of the Wahabees gave him. He immediately turned back with the new comer; and when both were dismounted, there commenced between them a conflict of civilities, partly in speech and partly in dumb show, which lasted several minutes. Each repeated the same inquiries, and the same protestations a dozen times, and each a dozen times touched the hand of the other. In the midst, however, of this mutual assault of politeness, I still thought I could discern in Abd-ool-azeez's manner a sort of conscious superiority; and the imposing reserve which tempered his professions formed a strong contrast with the visible eagerness of expression and gesture of the stranger. This latter, they told me, was the schaiçh of a smaller kabilé, connected with the chief of the Wahabees by the double tie of kindred and of vassalage.

Presently the two personages sat down in the court of the palace, and seemed preparing to discuss an affair of importance. The fear of appearing curious made me

retire out of hearing; a ceremony which seemed entirely waived by the rest of the by-standers. The conference soon became animated. Gesticulation, which is never spared among the Arabs, rose higher and higher; opinions seemed more and more to clash; and such at last became the loudness of vociferation, and the violence of gesture, that, from expecting to see the two chiefs devour each other with caresses, I now began to apprehend that another kind of fate would befall them. I know not how it was, but some words which reached me where I stood struck me as relating to myself. I now accused my stupidity in tarrying so long to guess the subject of the dispute. The chiefs had met in perfect amity; they had sat down to converse with the utmost good-humour; and the only subject of difference which could have arisen must be my visit and my merits. Nothing seemed so clear as that one of the schaichs was my advocate, and the other my enemy. At this discovery, all my former discretion forsook me, and, as the audience increased every instant in numbers and in boisterousness, I resolved to mix with the crowd, and to advance within hearing. The first words which distinctly struck my ear were an unqualified sentence of death.

A thunderbolt falling at my feet could not have more astounded me. Had I met with no impediment I would immediately have been off. But fearful to betray my fear, and to draw upon me the eyes of the multitude by attempting to force my way through their closely wedged ranks, I was contented with making myself as small as possible, in order to elude observation. With a throbbing heart I continued to listen: but my palpitation prevented me from hearing another word, and all I could do was to watch the looks of the disputants. After the hawk's eye of Abd-ool-azeez had several times wandered round and round the crowd, as if seeking its prey, I at last saw it pounce upon me, and remain from that moment riveted upon my person. "It is all over with me now!" thought I; and indeed an Arab to my right made but too intelligible a sign to another on my left that no mercy must be expected. I was therefore ready to sink in the ground, when a third Arab, who stood before me, shrugging up his shoulders, cried out, "His fate is sealed;" and then with a deep sigh added, "Alas! poor Omar!"

Oh how I felt relieved on hearing that death was to be

Omar's portion, not mine. My heart dilated, my lungs expanded, and my blood again began to flow. Ashamed of my silly apprehensions, I stretched myself, resumed my erect posture, and felt as if I rose the whole height of my head above the surrounding multitude, over which I now cast all round a complacent look.

"Who is this Omar?" said I to my neighbour; "whose fate seems to excite such interest?"

"The boast of his tribe—the flower of his family, and the pride of his parents," answered the man, wiping the tears from his face.

"And for these offences," resumed I, "doomed to inevitable death?"

"'Tis too certain," replied my informer. "His liberality excited the envy of the ferocious Mooktar, who, only intent upon tempting Providence by the daily recension of his growing riches, never admitted mortal man to partake of his goods. Wroth that Omar, less wealthy, should yet be more respected, he added outrage to jealousy, every where insulted the object of his hate, and even lifted his lance against him; until at last Omar, in defence of his own life, took the life of his foe. Hereupon, lest Mooktar's powerful relations should sacrifice justice to pride, he absconded, and his antagonist's friends swore to revenge their slaughtered kinsman on whatever friend of the homicide—within the fifth generation*—their vengeful spears could reach. From this sanguinary resolve they now, however, in part desist. They agree to accept a ransom for the lives of Omar's kindred; but from their mercy Omar himself, of course, remains excluded. If found, he still must fall. Ibn-aly, the strange schaich, himself related to Omar, came in hopes of the youth's inclusion in this compromise. He has just been representing in the strongest terms to our chief—to whom Mooktar owed vassalage—the intolerable provocations on one side, and the long patience, and at last the unpremeditated retort on the other; but in vain! Even Abdool-azeez cannot compel Mooktar's friends to renounce the price of blood, the right they have on Omar's life. Behold them all ranged in a row behind our schaich, hissing like scotched snakes: see the looks of rage they dart on Omar's kinsmen, ranged on the opposite side behind their own chief Aly. Does it not seem as if each

* Within the fifth generation—thus far extends in honour the obligation of an Arab to carry his revenge for the slaughter of a kinsman.

troop were only waiting for the signal to fall on the other like beasts of prey, and to quench their thirst for blood only in the entrails of the last of their enemies?"

This account of my neighbour's was confirmed by the words which Abd-ool-azeez now uttered. "Omar," said he, "has incurred capital punishment, and while he remains concealed the sentence cannot be mitigated. If he have any thing to allege in his defence, let him come forward; let him plead his own cause; let him submit, should he fail in proving his innocence, to the wrath his crime deserves. In fine, let him seek the grant of his forfeited life in the generosity of his adversaries, and not in the impotence of their resentment."

"I understand," replied with a bitter smile the strange schaiçh, "Omar is to be by a false hope of pardon drawn out of his concealment, in order that his enemies, spurning his defence, may at their leisure drink his blood unto the last drop."

Abd-ool-azeez gave the stranger a daunting look, but coolly proceeded. "I doubt not," rejoined he, "that the kinsmen of the deceased would pledge themselves for the safety of the murderer, not only while the pleading lasted, but until he were again conducted beyond the pale of this district. What say they?" exclaimed he, looking all around—as if to invite the party concerned to confirm his supposition.

"We would, we would," answered several voices from among the cluster of Mooktar's relations; and this was the first symptom, on their part, of a return to something like moderation. But what became the universal astonishment when, upon this, a young man of the most prepossessing appearance, after struggling to break away from among the followers of Ibn-aly, at last was seen to spring forward into the open space left between the two schaiçhs as an arena for combat, and to offer to the astonished eyes of the beholders the actually present Omar! Submitting only to concealment in compliance with his friends' desires, this noble-minded youth had impatiently brooked the crouching attitude of fear and disguise. He thought the circumstances of his case needed only be known to make his most inveterate antagonists own the guiltlessness of his conduct; and the confused and tumultuous assent of some of Mooktar's kinsmen to the proposal of the supreme schaiçh, he had considered a challenge which his character no longer allowed him to

disregard. But Omar wholly trusted to the dictates of justice: he had left out of his reckoning the suggestions of passion. When the brothers of the deceased—those who most reluctantly had yielded even to the partial compromise in favour of the innocent friends of the guilty Omar—actually saw before their eyes, and within reach of their poniards, the youth they had so long and so fruitlessly sought, they could not contain their fury. Drawing the already sharpened dagger out of his bosom, the eldest of the party sprang forward like a tiger upon his unsuspecting prey, and plunged the shining blade into Omar's side, ere the attendants of the schaich had leisure or presence of mind to arrest his heavy arm:—the blood spouted from the wound.

At this sight the prince sprang up; and, rending his vestment, "Friends of Mooktar," he cried, "what have you done! Under my own eyes; in my very court, thus to break the faith just pledged, to perjure yourselves, to set me at naught, and to disgrace our whole tribe! O Arab, Arab! Time, while it lasts, never can wipe out this foul stain!"—and he beat his naked breast.

"Our assent," answered, deeply blushing, the almost breathless offender, "was only founded on the solemn assurance that none of the murderer's friends knew what spot on earth his presence defiled: you see he was in the midst of their very troop."

"And what of that?" resumed the schaich. "To me you had committed the task of procuring you justice; and all know whether I fulfilled my trust. Speak, foes of Omar, as well as his friends, if I showed any undue partiality. But you have infringed your promise; you have trodden upon your engagement; and if Omar dies, murder has only been repaid by equal murder. Your own blood will have to atone for the blood which you spilt."

These words were heard by Omar. Weak as he was, and expecting his wound to prove mortal, yet could he not brook to rest the fairness of his own character merely on the foul deed of his adversaries. He insisted on making the defence which before had been granted him, and proving his entire innocence. The schaich gave the requisite permission; and in order that his almost extinct voice might be heard, immediately imposed on all the strictest silence.

Supported by two of his nearest relations, Omar now

advanced, and in words few and faint, but most clear and impressive, stated the manifold insults he had received, and the daily forbearance he had shown, until human patience no longer could endure the provocation, and the chastisement had been extorted, which, beyond his intention, had ended in Mooktar's death. Few were those among his hearers who, when he concluded his speech, pronounced him not in their hearts far more than merely acquitted:—worthy of applause, of reward, of every honour.

But among those was not the supreme schaiḥ. Whether prompted by extreme love of justice, or by a latent bias towards his own tribe, "Omar," exclaimed he, to the dismay of all, "you have chosen to rest your safety on the merits of your case, and have compelled me to sit in judgment on one I could have wished to save. I own you deserving of pity, but I cannot pronounce you entitled to pardon. That word may not pass my lips."

Then, turning to the kinsmen of Mooktar, "Friends of the slain," continued he, "I am going to deliver into your hands that which, though in part too hastily anticipated, yet in its whole is yours. I am going to give you full possession of your victim. If, not satisfied with having drawn blood for blood, you must have the full certainty of taking life for life, achieve your work of vengeance; plunge deeper your daggers into the heart of Omar; and secure yourselves against any remaining possibility of his surviving his wound and boasting of his deed."

At these cruel words, Omar, exhausted with agitation and with loss of blood, fell senseless on the pavement; his friends uttered mournful groans, and the leader of his enemies, having whetted his knife on the steps of the palace, stooped to perform the last act of revenge, by plunging his poniard to the hilt in the heart of the already speechless youth,—when Abd-ool-azeez, yet holding back his hand, in a louder voice continued:

"After, however," said he, "having thus performed my duty both as arbitrator and as judge; let me add this one thing more, that the act I am forced to permit must perpetuate between two distinguished families the rancour just kindled, and doom it only to end in the destruction of the tribes to which they belong. I therefore denounce, as ruler of these realms, as minister of the Most High, and as apostle of the only pure faith, on

whoever shall draw down upon his country so heavy an evil my eternal malediction. Cursed be the hand that shall advance to extinguish the embers of an already fleeting life; cursed the lip that shall from an already agonized enemy withhold a free and unqualified forgiveness!"

"Yes; cursed be that hand, and cursed be those lips!" now re-echoed in unison from all the beholders—save one, who himself, however, as if already struck by the anathema, and no longer daring to oppose the universal impulse, now with a ghastly look and quivering lip faintly uttered, "Take my pardon;" and, overwhelmed with disappointment and rage, fell back among his troop, and disappeared.

Shouts of joy now arose from every quarter. Of the dead Mooktar all further thoughts were dismissed, and the still breathing Omar alone continued the object of the general solicitude. Abd-ool-azeez assigned him a small abode near the palace: and thither the youth was carried on the shoulders of his friends, but with little hopes of saving his life. In honour of the reconciliation between the two families, the supreme chief ordered a sumptuous feast. While the entertainment was preparing he presented me to his kinsman. "This stranger," said he, "is come to bend the knee with us to the Most High in the rightful worship. He abandons the luxuries of the Turks for the frugal life of the Wahabees, and brings the sciences taught in cities, that they may fructify in our camps." Then, turning to me, "The Othomans," added he, "boast of once having conquered these regions. Their armies crossed them indeed; but as the arrow cleaves the air, without leaving a trace. The Wahabees soon shall march through the land of the Turks; but they shall go as the plough goes through the ground, cutting up all it meets in its way, and leaving behind it an indelible track. In vain, to conceal his wrinkles, old Suleiman paints his careworn face: at the bare sound of our name the paleness of fear overcasts all his features, and proclaims his true feelings through the lying crimson that glows on his cheek!"

The repast being ready, the various groups of guests sat down round the loaded platters, according to their rank. Mine being that of a foreign ambassador, procured me the honour of a place near the schaichs. Scarce had I, according to the country fashion, thrust my

fingers in the dish, when an Arab, so enveloped in his haick* that his figure was not more cognizable than his face, walked into the room, with great solemnity approached the place where I sat, put the hem of my garment to his lips, and his lips to my ear, and in a whisper interrupted by loud and frequent sobs, invited me to leave my dinner, and to go where he should precede me. He most obstinately indeed refused to explain who he was, and for what purpose he desired my company, but there appeared something so earnest and impressive in his manner that I could not say nay; and though my neighbours pressed me to stay, and loudly inveighed against the unmannerly Arab who called a new comer away from the feast at its very beginning, I followed my mysterious herald, and bade him lead the way.

Contenting himself with thanking me for yielding to his entreaty by a silent but earnest pressure of the hand, he conducted me to a hovel at the bottom of a narrow lane: There, gently opening the door of a back-room into which he preceded me on tiptoe, he ushered me among a large assembly of persons of both sexes, so intent upon the object around which they were collected, that he was obliged to push them aside in order to show me where lay, on a species of litter, wan, pale, and seeming at the last gasp, the wounded Omar.

The party assembled round this poor youth were his parents and relations, who, when Ibn-aly his cousin set out for Derayah to negotiate his safety, had not been able to prevent him—impatient as he felt under the imputation of cowardice—from following, mixed among his kinsman's suite, and had, therefore, in their turn also followed, in order if possible to check his impetuosity, or at least to support his valour;—a circumstance which enabled them, after the imprudence he committed, immediately to come forward to his assistance, and to afford him all the care his situation required. Though his wound seemed not to have reached the vital parts, yet had Mooktar's dagger gone deep in his breast, and the fever and debility it had left rendered his state to all appearances so critical, that his friends felt the utmost apprehension for his life.

Hearing that a stranger had arrived at Derayah, skilled in the knowledge of the West, they determined to request his advice; and it was the father—the afflicted Beder

* Haick—vide supra, page 123.

himself—who came for me to the palace. The fear of marring the hilarity of the feast by his mournful looks had made him conceal his face, and the dread of incurring the reproaches of the host for taking away his guest had induced him to keep closed his lips. Even now, that out of hearing of the mirthful board, and arrived with me near the bed of sickness, he attempted to speak, he could only point in silence to his son, lying almost insensible on his couch—and moved his lips in vain. No sound came, and the tears which mechanically trickled down his cheeks belied the look of composure he strove to preserve. As to his wife and daughters, they made not even an attempt to suppress their emotion. Casting away all Mussulman reserve, they convulsively grasped my hand, covered it with kisses, and bathed it in tears. “Cure, ah cure our loved Omar!” they cried, with heart-rending moans; “for we know that it is in your power.”

This supposition was rather appalling; and the first thing I did was to disclaim every pretension to infallibility.

After that protest, indispensable on the occasion, but which met with little credence, I walked up to the patient, and while all the rest of the party formed around us an immovable and breathless circle, of which every eye centred on my looks, and tried to dive into my soul, I endeavoured to ascertain Omar’s condition. The chief medicine his case seemed, in my opinion, to require, was bodily rest and mental composure.

“Sir,” said I, therefore, to the father, whose breath while I spoke answered not, but whose eyes devoured my words, “the character in which I come to this country is that of envoy of Schaich Mansoor, not of disciple of Ibn-senna. What little skill in medicine I may possess was acquired as an object of curiosity, not as a means of profit. The gratuitousness of my assistance entitles me to stipulate beforehand for the most implicit obedience to all my prescriptions.”

“Order us to wrest from Aly’s tomb his plumed turban,” hereupon cried the father. “Command us to crawl on our bare knees to the kaaba,” exclaimed the mother. “Bid us renounce all the honours of the married state,” spoke, in faltering accents, the daughters.

“All these,” I observed, “would be very difficult achievements; but of very little efficacy as a cure. A much easier thing might be of infinitely more advantage: namely, for the relations not to keep the patient in a con-

stant fever by their alarms and their surmises; but to retire, to stay outside the room, and not to re-enter it, except with my permission."

This prescription, however, was in itself much too easily obeyed to have a chance of being enforced without the utmost difficulty. Nothing but the threats of losing their son to a certainty, unless it were adhered to, could make the good people clear the chamber, and commit their dearest treasure to my sole unwatched care.

Left alone with my patient, I very quietly mixed up a draught, and with an air of important solemnity composed a charm; pledged myself only for the efficacy of the annulet, but took care to see the potion drunk off to the last drop. The confidence in the spell, the composing nature of the medicine, and the quiet of the room procured the youth a refreshing sleep; and when he awoke, he found his fever abated and his strength recruited. I now dressed his wound, gave him some liquid food, and, calling in his friends, showed them the improvement in his looks. But so loud were their exclamations of joy, and so boisterous the blessings they bestowed on my ancestors for three generations back, that I soon turned them all out again. My part of Cerberus was unremittingly supported, until long intervals of tranquillity and visits of an instant only had removed all danger. When, owing to his good constitution, the youth became visibly convalescent, I stepped modestly forward to receive the thanks due to nature for preserving the hopes of a powerful house, whose gratitude was proportionate to my apparent merits. Had I saved Omar only through dint of the most consummate skill and the most unwearied toil, the feelings expressed could not have been more ardent or more sincere.

CHAPTER XIV.

ABD-OOŁ-AZEEZ had provided me, at Derayah, with a lodging such as became a guest of my distinction. In fair weather it let in no rain, and in foul it stopped not the water from running out. My meals, which came ready dressed from the schaiçh's own kitchen, had at least one great merit—that of affording little excitement to intem-

perance. Now and then there arrived in single state, before or after my dinner, a plate of sweetmeats or a bowl of hoshab, as a more pointed mark of attention. If the custom of the country—I should rather say the strictness of the Wahabee tenets—forbade my being entertained with bands of singers and dancers, my leisure was equally well employed in myself entertaining all the idle and curious of the place; an assembly of whom attended my levee every morning, except when I went out to pay my own court to the prince, or to visit my patient. With the schaich I used to talk of Suleiman—of his force, his policy, the intrigues of those who usurped his authority, and the cabals of those who coveted his succession. With Omar I used to handle a topic to me still more interesting; my own dear self. I related to him every extraordinary object I had seen, and every strange adventure I had experienced.

No one could help loving the young Bedoween. Combining gentleness with spirit, and modesty with noble pride, his mind displayed in the midst of the desert the cultivation of the college, and the graces of a court. He used to lie for hours listening to my narrations, which often drew a deep sigh from his bosom; and when I had done speaking he would sometimes raise himself on his couch, and in his turn, taking up the discourse, relate the history of his tribe and the vicissitudes of his family. Above all, he loved to expatiate on the purity of his blood and the virtues of his parents: to tell how his father, abhorring the frequent divorces in vogue among the Arabs, and the sacrifice they made of lasting affections to transient enjoyments, had never had any wife but his mother; and how he himself proposed to follow his sire's good example. So exalted were his sentiments, and so pleasing his conversation, that when I shut my eyes, I sometimes could fancy I heard my friend Spiridion. Externals only differed; their hearts wore the same hue: and let me add, that the right feelings of the Arab, of which I became the constant witness at a time when, softened by sorrow and steadied by experience, my mind was prepared to receive the full benefit of the communication, operated a real and important change in my own disposition. I resembled the clay which situated near the rose imbibes some of its fragrance.

What wonder, then, that each thus imparting to the other new and valued means of enjoyment or happiness,

a tender friendship should by degrees have arisen between us. It acquired such intensity, that after the period had been fixed for Omar's return to El-Gaddeh, the place of his residence, he found means to linger at Derayah some time longer on the score of debility, with no other view but to put off the evil day of our separation; and when at last he no longer could urge any new excuse for staying, he made it his last solemn request, on taking leave of the great schaiçh, that I might be permitted to accompany him home, and to stay under his roof. This favour the prince, after some demur, was prevailed upon to grant: but only for a limited period, and on the express condition that I should hold myself in readiness to return to Derayah the moment I was summoned.

At El-Gaddeh, and in Beder's abode, I need not say that I felt more at ease than I had done at Derayah. My kind hosts treated me to every diversion which the country afforded. Sometimes we went out hunting, at others we witnessed sports of agility and strength; and on the days we passed at home, Omar used to collect all the poets and story-tellers of the country to pay me high-flown compliments. According to their accounts, I might trace my descent at pleasure, either from the Genii or the Peris; and as to my achievements—those of Antar himself were child's play in comparison. Omar's relations and friends behaved to me as if all this high-strained praise had been mere matter-of-fact; his father seemed to rejoice in our growing attachment, and Ibn-aly himself, the head of the family, as well as of the tribe, paid me the most flattering attention. Strange to tell, but true—the place where in the course of my checkered life I experienced most of that glowing kindness which springs from the heart, was that where I sat down the greatest stranger, and which, in point of geographical situation, lay farthest removed from the land of my birth.

I yet only reckoned the length of my stay at El-Gaddeh by single days, when one evening, returning with Omar from a camp pitched on the skirts of the desert, the youth suddenly stopped to contemplate the setting sun. After some time watching its decline with a pensive air, "Selim," said he, pointing to that part of the horizon where its broad disk was rapidly gliding behind the earthly globe, "your heart, I fear, still lingers there. Do what we may, some day we shall see you take up your staff, and bend back your steps to the regions of the West."

"Omar," answered I, "*there* certainly arose the first affections of my youth: in those regions were knit the strongest ties that bind my soul!"—and though this speech might seem only framed for the occasion, and intended to enhance the merit of my stay, it had begun to be the language of truth. When I thought of my no longer existing Euphrosyné, of my still—as I hoped—breathing Alexis, and of my ever-faithful friend Spiridion, tears of tenderness started in my eye, and the longing to return to the soil which had been blessed by their shadow, really made my heart swell with ill-suppressed emotion.

"Ah!" rejoined Omar, "why cannot we offer you, among us, ties strong as those that draw you away! I wished my Selim to marry one of my sisters, in order that our blood might be mixed; that you might strike root in our soil. O that my parents, who so dote upon the preserver of their son, would for once sacrifice the pride of their race to the promptings of their gratitude and affections!"

"Sir," replied I, somewhat nettled, "supposing your parents wished for the alliance, know you that I can accept it? I told you before that I once was married: I told you that I had had for my wife the daughter of a bey of Egypt: I since have sworn never to plight my vows again. Inform your parents of this engagement, in order that they may be troubled on my account neither with scruples nor with fears. To free them from all restraint, and to rid them of all uneasiness, I soon shall return to Derayeh. Indeed I am to blame—in my situation—thus to stay away from the great schaich, to whom my employers sent me."

"Forgive the unintentional offence," resumed Omar, reclining his head. "I could mean no reflection on your birth. The genuine Arab thinks the purity of his pedigree sullied even by mixture with the Tartar blood of the sultans—who probably would with equal care shun the taint of Arab blood. These are man's follies in every quarter of the globe!"

An effort now was made to turn the conversation to other topics; but with little success. Constrained, it first languished, and then died away. Omar, so far from appearing relieved by the indifference I expressed to the prejudices of his friends, would rather have seen me anxious to overcome their objections. He regretted my

lukewarm desire for a permanent connexion with his house ; and from the day of this excursion a despondency came over him, which, having its source in the mind, baffled every power of medicine.

Finding I could do my friend no good by my stay, and was wasting my time at El-Gaddeh, I seriously prepared to make good my words, and return to Derayah. The hour was already fixed for my departure, when Ibn-aly sent to speak with me.

"Selim," said he, as soon as we were alone, "you have now associated with us long enough to know our customs and our disposition. See whether you could like for ever to turn away from the West, and sit down among our tribes, so you were made a sharer in all their prerogatives—so you were given a wife from that house in which you already have gained so many friends. I must not conceal from you that my kinsmen have brought their minds to this proposal only after a considerable struggle. Rarely we marry out of our district, more rarely still out of our country : but such is the love we bear Omar, such the fear which his languor inspires us with of losing him, if we refuse what alone can fix you for ever in the land of the Wahabees, that for his sake we not only permit, we ardently desire the union. Nor need you fear that objection, wholly unconnected with your person, when once removed, will leave a root from which to spring up afresh. Once adopted as the son of my friends, you may to the end of your days rely on their support and affection."

Had an alliance with the children of Wahab never been proposed to me, I should probably have left their country in the full conviction that in my present state of mind I could not have accepted it. I had originally sought these sectaries only to fly from Suleiman, and I had since only prolonged my stay with them because I could nowhere else expect so hospitable a reception : but though resigned to live a while in Arabia, it was not among Arabs I wished to die. Unfortunately, after people so proud as these lords of the desert had overcome their own scruples to the connexion, it became expedient for me to conquer my more reasonable reluctance, or to quit their abode immediately. I could not tarry where I had refused what was offered with so great an effort, and was considered as so signal an honour. I therefore resolved upon the sacrifice of my feelings to my situa-

tion: but, still apprehensive of diminishing my importance by too ready an acceptance of an offer unwillingly made, I appeared yet awhile to hang back, and again alleged my vow, as I had done before to Omar. *That*, however, was not admitted to have any weight but what my inclination gave it. No oath, taken during my state of darkness, could remain binding after my eyes were opened to the true light; and on Ibn-aly assuring me solemnly, that the Wahabee was only held to perform what the Wahabee had promised, I yielded at last to so powerful an argument. The sanction of the grand schaiçh, however, was deemed necessary, before a marriage so greatly out of the common rule could be concluded: it was asked, and, after some little hesitation, obtained.

Among sisters all equally straight, whose faces I had scarcely had a glimpse of during their brother's danger at Derayah, and whose voices I had seldom heard since, I harboured no preference, and therefore submitted implicitly to the choice of my friends; it fell upon the eldest of the brood, who still remained unmarried;—a maiden no longer reckoned quite in her prime, as she had attained the mature age of fifteen. The reason of her continuing so unusual a time a barren plant in so prolific a soil, was the untimely death of two young men, both of distinguished rank, to whom she had been successively betrothed. The one fell in battle, the other was cut off by a fever; and perhaps the idea of some fatality attached to her name had since kept off other suitors. I felt no superstition on that score, and was as well pleased with the fair one allotted me as I would have been with any other female of the family. No sooner had the union obtained Abd-ool-azeez's consent, than, for fear, I suppose, lest the new suitor should again slip through the noose, the wedding-day was fixed at a very early period.

All my remaining cash was employed in fitting out my future spouse with necklaces and bracelets, ear, nose, wrist, finger, ankle, and toe rings—which, though a Wahabee, I found that, as a woman, my bride could endure. The presents which in my turn I received from her parents and friends were of a more useful description: a fine horse completely equipped with mace, lance, and carbine; a commodious goat-skin tent, with its apartment to the right and left; a Persian carpet; a handsome sofa case, and a variety of household articles. My friend

Omar, anxious to see me in every respect on a par with the proudest of his house, supplied whatever others might omit. I except pipes and chaplets: Waliabees neither smoke nor count their beads.

The very last items of the *menage* of which I was permitted to make an inventory were, as usual, the charms of my bride. When, however, after running from tent to tent—as is deemed absolutely indispensable among decorous females—in order to escape me, she at last suffered herself to be caught by her more nimble companions, and brought by force to her expectant bridegroom, I could not help thinking that others, more worth pursuing, had come more readily; and found nothing to drive from my mind the deep-sunk image of my Euphrosyné. The circumstance was rather a relief to my feelings than a disappointment to my taste. Had Aïsché been so superlatively handsome as to kindle anew in my heart any very violent flame, I should have felt as if committing an infidelity to the memory of her whom I could now only honour by tardy and unavailing regrets.—Not that the sister of Omar must positively be called plain. The sun, indeed, might have found little to spoil in her complexion, had it been allowed freely to shine upon her person: but with teeth as white as ivory, and eyes and hair as black as jet, she had a countenance which, like Omar's, beamed with sweetness, and the Arabs all declared that her limbs resembled the branches of the date-tree waving in the wind; which only meant that she moved very gracefully. Her features, besides, were regular, and the least touch of those cosmetics, so plentifully used by our artful Chiotes, would have enabled her in a civilized country to pass for a positive beauty, or, at least, for a very captivating brunette—had she not most perversely destroyed her chance for ever, by having every prominent part of her face, neck, and arms indelibly sprigged over in marks of gunpowder, after the most approved pattern.

Her mind, like her person, resembled that of her brother. It was fraught with every amiable quality; and in its overflowings of love and of confidence, I learned what even Omar had carefully kept from my knowledge; namely, that while employed at Derayeh in curing the wound of the brother, I had unconsciously insinuated love's sharpest dart into the heart of the sister. Her secret passion had, perhaps, contributed as much as the professed friendship of Omar to determine the parents in

favour of the union. The solicitude of these worthy people in behalf of their children remained not unrewarded:—the son and the daughter, each obtaining what they so long had wished for, each seemed to acquire new health and new spirits.

But if the bud, which had pined for want of the refreshing dews from heaven, now revived, it revived only to become the sport of storms and whirlwinds: for where warm affections are considered as the homage due, cold esteem soon is construed into the crime of aversion—and that crime tarried not to be laid to my charge. At first, indeed, Aïsché sought the cause only in herself. “Alas!” cried she, “how should a poor Bedoween girl be able to fix those affections on which have been lavished all the fascinations of the women of the cities—Nature has not given me their charms, nor education their art. I have only my poor simple love with which to retain love: and they say that the more of its ardours are bestowed the fewer are obtained in return:”—but by degrees my restless spouse began to render my own imaginary fickleness responsible for her disappointments. In a country where the heart resembles a volcano whose eruptions never cease, the fires of mine could not be supposed wholly to slumber, and superior attractions abroad were accused of my indifference at home.

No assurance of mine could remove this idea; no behaviour natural or assumed could quiet these fears. My looks, my gestures, my very motions, ever watched, ever weighed, and ever found wanting, were ever considered as confirming my treason. The most opposite conduct incurred the same sinister interpretations. Aïsché was always ready to believe without proofs what she dreaded without reason. Her ingenuity had no employment but to establish my imaginary crimes, and to build upon them her real unhappiness. Did her unfounded jealousies lay my spirits completely,—“she saw how matters stood; her person no longer possessed the smallest power to please; her love could not afford me the least solace; her very company was become to me a burthen!” Did, on the contrary, in spite of her unceasing anxiety, a momentary glimpse of cheerfulness unfurrow my brow,—“she wondered at the sudden change; she tried to find out what success I had met with abroad, so great as even to carry home the remains of my yet unallayed hilarity!” Nothing but the most insidious and

perplexing scrutiny ever was my welcome, and after succeeding to embarrass me completely by questions, the answers to which, in whatever shape they might be framed, ever led to the same conclusions, Aïsché was always sure to found upon the very embarrassment which she caused the confirmation of her unjust surmises, until at last I no longer knew how to act or to look, always in her presence had an air of constraint, concealed from her my most innocent actions as if they had been culpable, and, thanks to her own unremitting labour, with a clear conscience wore a face of guilt.

The brother, who always kept me company when I was not with the sister, at last succeeded by his representations to remove in a certain degree my consort's suspicions of my fidelity. Who would not have thought every point of repose and of comfort carried by this change? Not at all! Tender minds must have their grievances. They are to them food and raiment. It was a worse symptom that nothing could attach me; it showed a total disgust of the country; it increased the danger of losing me altogether. From only fearing I might withdraw from her arms, Aïsché now began to tremble lest some day I should entirely abandon her home, her country, and her friends. The moment she saw me at all thoughtful, she was sure I meditated nothing less than to make my escape, and to return to the land of my fathers. It was useless to deny the charge: the stronger the protestations I made, the closer Aïsché seemed to cling to her chimera. "Speak not; utter not a syllable—give me no assurance," she would cry in her agitation; "I know you Osmanlees abhor truth. If you pledge not your word, if you waste not your faith in empty vows, you may, perhaps, continue to love me, to stay with me, to press me to your bosom a little while longer; but if you make a promise, if you take an oath, I am undone at once. The promise only made to be broken, the oath only taken for the sake of the perjury, will goad you on the faster to my destruction; and you will have no rest till I am become a deserted, forsaken, widowed wretch!" And hereupon she sometimes would clasp her hands round my neck, imploring, that before I abandoned her I would plunge my dagger to her heart, lest she should survive my loss. At other times she would throw herself on the ground, and with loud wailings

tear her hair and beat her breast, as if my desertion had already come to pass.

A sturdy and robust attachment might have weathered these constant hurricanes; but mine, never sufficiently rooted, had remained weak and delicate. It soon got bruised, and more than once was in danger of total eradication. I began to dread home as a theatre of constant strife and contention. Sure to be reproached when with Aïsché, for the want of that ardour which she had not known how to cherish and to strengthen, I valued solitude even as affording me leisure to feel the esteem which still remained, and I longed most anxiously for a change of scene, for a more active life, for the bustle of a camp, and for the agitation of warfare, as the only means to enjoy domestic peace.

Unfortunately, there prevailed this year among the Wahab tribes an unusual listlessness. The last expedition of Achmet-kehaya, though not successful enough to make the Wahabees stay quietly at home, had yet diminished their eagerness for distant warfare. While some of the yet unsubdued kables of Montefih and Benihalel were making nearer approaches than they had done of late years to the domain of Abd-ool-azeez, that portion of the schaich's own subjects whose chief residence was in towns and villages showed greater dilatoriness than in preceding seasons to lead their flocks into the desert for pasture. It was even doubted awhile whether Ibn-sehood, Abd-ool-azeez's eldest son, to whom his father had for some years' past on account of his great age intrusted the conduct of his warlike expeditions, would go into camp at all; and there seemed at one moment no chance whatever of my beholding the stopping of the least caravan, or the plundering of the smallest sanctuary in honour of God—when all at once the whole nation, men, women, and children, sallied forth from their stationary habitations, to pitch their tents in the wilderness.

Each tribe had its separate camp at the distance of a league or two from its nearest neighbours. In each camp, the tent of the chief occupied the most elevated and central spot: round him the members of his own family formed the innermost circle; and round these again his remoter vassals and subjects ranged themselves in wider concentric circles, of which their respective ranks and possessions regulated the distance.

Ibn-sehood's encampment of course was the most con-

siderable. To that, as to head-quarters, was sent from all the smaller and remoter camps constant intelligence of every interesting occurrence in their immediate vicinity. There also the schaichs of the minor divisions met, to hold council with the commander on the general plan of the campaign, and to receive their several instructions respecting its conduct. Ibn-sehood's camp was the capital for action, as Derayah was that for repose.

The assemblage of tents among which stood my own professedly bore a warlike form, and had a warlike destination; yet it must be owned that slight were the shades of difference between the Bedoweens' most martial array and their most peaceful establishment. Even in times of profoundest peace, the Arab of the desert lives in camps, constantly moving from place to place, and ready alike for attack and for defence; and during the periods of the briskest warfare, the combatants still only advance and retreat surrounded by their families, and as solicitous to feed their flocks as to fight their enemies. On ordinary occasions, each subordinate schaich, at the head of his immediate subjects, halts, moves on, attacks, or flies as his individual fancy or judgment prompts him; dreams not of acting in concert with his brother schaichs; and evinces no sort of attention to the movements of the chief ruler. It is only when the commander of the whole nation purposes some definite expedition or coup-de-main of great importance and short duration, that all the lesser schaichs and their vassals close in round his standard. Nor do they then even consider themselves as engaged to assist him longer than suits their own convenience. As soon as they become tired of the service, or find the plunder short of their expectations—without asking leave of the commander, or waiting the end of the campaign—they quietly secede, and return to their own peculiar district. The voice of fanaticism, the interests of religion may, at times, excite to the most daring and perilous enterprises; but they fail to enforce a patient and persevering discipline; and nothing do the Wahab tribes so much resemble in their mode of warfare as those swarms of devouring locusts, offspring of the same country, who often, when least expected, invade a district, according as the wind sets one way or another fall on this field or on that, and when all is devoured, again rise, fly elsewhere, and in no place leave the marks of a permanent possession.

Some of the Wahab divisions more to the westward had, very soon after encamping, the happiness to be engaged in skirmishes with the children of Beni-Haled. Our camp was left in a state of inactivity somewhat longer. Once or twice indeed we received intelligence from our scouts of hostile detachments hovering at a distance. Ibn-aly immediately gave the signal for the alert, and sallied forth with all that were able to bear arms; but the first time we could not even, spite of all our diligence, get sight of the retreating enemy: the second time, indeed, we descried him, and in such superior force, that we had our tents taken down and our harems packed up in baskets, in order to be ready for retreat if necessary; but on this occasion, as on the former, the foe at our approach fell back and disappeared in the desert, without giving us any other trouble than that of again unpacking our families, and unfolding our tents. My regrets were not outrageous. The age was past of my disinterested passion for blows; and I saw a chance of little else where Arab met Arab.

Nothing thus materially accelerating or retarding the swiftness of our march, except the greater or less abundance of provender for our horses and pasture for our sheep, we advanced till within three or four conacks* of El-hassa. Unfortunately, the facility of our progress had lulled us into a fatal security. Every evening the whole camp used at an early hour to yield to the sweets of repose, trusting almost entirely for safety to the vigilance of the watch-dogs that guarded its approaches. One night a most tremendous barking of our four-footed sentinels on a sudden spread a general alarm. Those among us already sunk in the arms of sleep started up, and those still watchful ran to their weapons. Busy with some preparations for the next day's march, I had continued up, and already had incurred reproaches for my restlessness, when this appalling concert drove away for the moment all thoughts save of combat. I took a hasty farewell of Aïsché, ran to untie my horse's legs,† vaulted into my saddle, and rode in the direction whence the noise proceeded. The whole camp was already stirring. Every one issued forth in the greatest confusion from his tent to inquire of the other what had

* Within three or four conacks—or days' journey.

† To untie my horse's legs—The Arab mode of securing horses during the night, consists in tying their legs to a stake driven in the ground

happened;—but this no one could tell. Presently a distant clash of lances gave to our apprehensions a more definite form and a greater intensity. A hostile detachment which the whole day before was perceived to keep us in sight, had contrived, under favour of the night, to approach us in such complete silence as to leave every one of our videttes on two legs unaware of its proximity, until our more watchful four-footed outposts raised their warning howl. Not knowing the number of our assailants, darkness with its magnifying powers reported it to be so great that retreat was judged the only means of escaping discomfiture. Even this, however, could not be effected except under cover of a partial resistance; and as soon as Ibn-aly had collected a sufficient number of men he went out in quest of the enemy. I joined him on his way, as did my friend Omar. Never was disorder equal to that which our camp now presented. The group of watch-dogs first alarmed, had by their howlings, gradually set barking all the remainder in the most opposite quarters; whence, with the certainty of being attacked on some point, we knew not in the least where to direct our defence, ran like blind people to the sound, and left the guidance of our motions entirely to chance. Sometimes thinking ourselves in contact with the enemy when farthest from the point of his attack, and at others fancying our assailants a mile off when in the midst of their troop, our offensive and our defensive operations were equally ill-timed: half the night we fought with empty space, and the other half pursued our own comrades. The watch-dogs themselves, bewildered by the engagement, and no longer distinguishing in the fray between friends and foes, fell on both alike, and not only by their incessant yells so increased the horrors of the fight, but by their savage fury so augmented the bloodshed, that we were obliged to kill several of our old guardians, now unwittingly become our destroyers. As, however, every instant brought from the interior of the camp fresh supplies to the scene of action, we contrived to make a stout defence, without sensibly losing ground.

Meantime the portion of the tribe not engaged in its protection, was no less busily employed in its removal. Some were taking down the tents, others putting up the utensils and baggage, others again loading the beasts of burthen—while here and there a party stole out, and,

unseen by the hostile troop, drove the cattle into the part of the desert most out of reach of danger. Thus, in less than two hours, the whole camp was broken up, and on the move. The combatants on our side hereupon began to slacken their exertions, and to keep up a more retreating skirmish. This was the easier, as the enemy himself, finding an unlooked-for resistance, seemed more anxious to secure the booty made than to incur fresh blows in trying to make further prizes, and testified a great desire to slink quietly away, ere the dawn should discover his weakness, and increase our strength by reinforcements from the neighbouring camp. Thus, while we fell back in one direction, our assailants did the same in the other; and several times we were greatly tempted to wheel about, and to attempt the recovery of our captured equipages; but the fear of a surprise overcame this desire. Continuing our retrograde movement unslackened while darkness lasted, we compassed a distance of near six leagues from the place of combat before the incipient dawn threw any light upon our condition. The first rays of the sun showed the whole plain, as far as the eye could reach, covered with camels and other beasts of burthen, pacing singly or in small groups, loaded with tents, luggage, women, and children, and intermixed with droves of oxen and flocks of sheep, which were every moment endeavouring to stop and to graze, unconscious of danger. The horsemen, who thus far had kept together in tolerably close order, now fell asunder like a bundle of untied sticks, and set off at full speed each for some different point of the compass; so that presently nothing was seen in every direction but warriors crossing each other at full speed, like shooting stars: each seeking, among the widely dispersed apparatus of the camp, his own family, furniture, and equipages.

For my part, I soon had the satisfaction of descrying my Aïsché, exalted in the midst of her retinue on a dromedary as tall as a house, towering above all her surrounding women, and, bating the uneasiness she had felt on my account, in perfect health as well as safety. On seeing me, after much anxious search, suddenly reappear before her eyes alive and unhurt, her joy was indescribable: she gave a scream of delight; and at the same moment her whole suite welcomed me with shouts of pleasure.

It is dreadful at all times to lose what we love; but far more dreadful is the shock, when, after a period of intense alarm, the loss takes place just as all danger seems to be gone by, and nothing apparently remains but to exult in a renewed term of safety and bliss; when the fresh blow of sorrow is struck just as the heart begins anew to dilate with all the fullest exuberance of frantic joy; and, above all, when that blow arises, not from the evil dreaded, but precisely from its being overcome.

Such was my fate. Forgetting her exalted situation, or unable to check her impatience, Aïsché tried, unassisted, to meet my embrace. In the hurry of the break up, her camel had been loosely girt. The sudden pressure made the pillion turn; she fell to the ground, received a hurt which her condition rendered mortal, and in a few hours expired in my arms.

Assuredly at no time had my love for the living Aïsché equalled the passion kindled in my breast for Euphrosyné, since her loss. But without being violent, my regard for my Bedoween wife was sincere. It rested on esteem and on gratitude—on endearing recollections and on fond and flattering hopes. All was dashed to the ground in an instant, and long I dwelt on the first of my sorrows inflicted only by Providence, and free from all mixture of self-reproach.

CHAPTER XV.

THE first anguish of my feelings had scarcely begun to subside, when the schaichs of the different Wahab tribes received a summons to meet Ibn-sehood with their followers near a particular well in the desert, whence they were to start on a distant expedition. The name of the enemy or the point of attack we were, according to the custom of the Wahab commanders, only to learn on setting out from the place of rendezvous. Ample room was left meanwhile for conjecture, and every instant new surmises arose, and were abandoned for others of still later birth. Some expected a coup-de-main on Mekkah, others an attempt upon Imam-aly. From all quarters the schaichs of every rank hastened with their

vassals to the spot where the secret was to be disclosed, some on dromedaries swifter than the wind, others on steeds not less fleet; one half armed with pistols and matchlocks, the other only with sabres and lances; and none encumbered with more provision than two skins could hold, the one filled with flour, and the other with water. When collected, we might muster about fifteen thousand men—though our enemies, deceived by the rapidity of our motions, which often showed us almost at the same instant in the most distant places, gave us credit for double the number. No army could be better appointed than ours both for offensive and defensive warfare, or could combine more active courage with more passive hardihood. Every where the wariest caution accompanied the most undaunted fanaticism, and whatever the supreme schaiçh of the nation might command for the advancement of the faith, his followers expressed themselves determined to achieve—or to die. In short, we seemed to hold in our hands the fate of the Turkish empire.

But here let me for a moment interrupt my narration: warned by aches which had only relented for a while to return with double fury, let me inquire for what purpose my memoirs were begun, and in what guise I must pursue them to ensure its attainment. The interruption will not be long, and the story proceed the more rapidly afterward.

Unprincipled as my conduct must have appeared throughout, I might perhaps propitiate my reader by representing this unqualified disclosure of its errors as a sort of voluntary penance, undertaken to atone for my offences, and to avert the just wrath of Omnipotence: but in doing so I should forfeit all claims to veracity. It never was my belief, that where bitter tears or better deeds had not in the sequel of man's existence washed away the guilt of prior periods, an idle confession, only extorted by fear on the brink of eternity, and when, as it were, the downfall of the sinner had already begun, could still intercept his final doom, waft him safe to the portals of heaven, and close in his very sight the yawning furnaces of hell.

In a totally opposite view of things I might, perhaps, have deemed it imposing to appear as if I wished not only to brave the opinion of the world, but actually to defy its fellest vengeance, by making my misdeeds a subject of positive exultation and boast. Even of this pretence,

however, the imposition must soon be detected. On the eve of escaping from all human pursuit in the protecting arms of death—fast approaching that period when the shafts of man's resentment will not only recoil from the insensible jaws of my tomb, such an assertion could not fail to be speedily recognised as the vain vaunting only of secure cowardice.

The truth is, that so far from having been prompted to write my life by views the most distant and daring which the human intellect can harbour, I have only been urged to the undertaking by considerations the most minute and proximate that can influence human actions: namely, the wish to beguile, one by one, as they heavily crept on, those slowly revolving hours which, but for some object capable of entirely absorbing my attention, must have been passed in dwelling on my present impotence and sufferings, and must have left me a prey to weariness or pain.

On a bed of sickness, in a state of which death alone holds out the cure, and yet, while incapable of bodily exertion, retaining sufficient mental energy to struggle with my weakness, and to render it more irksome, I saw no other means of diverting my mind from the gloomy contemplation of a future which no longer can be mine, but by bending all my thoughts on that past of which I have enjoyed my portion. Thus only, though the sun of my days was setting to rise no more, might I still, in the glimmering dusk which pervades my last sleep, and amid the separation I am doomed to from the living, conjure up around my couch such phantoms of the dead or the distant as—once my friends or acquaintance—would not even now, in imagination, deny me the sweets of an occasional converse.

This, indeed, must have shown itself throughout almost every page of my memoirs the sole real object of my labours; for every where—as the reader cannot fail to perceive—I have rather directed my views to outward occurrences than to the inward workings of my own breast; rather sought the amusement of describing scenes I had witnessed on the busy stage of the world as a mere spectator, than the more serious occupation of analyzing my own feelings as an actor in the performance. In short, setting at defiance every rule of unity in composition, and more intent upon stringing together a variety of desultory events and characters, than upon carrying

on through all its successive developments the history of a single individual, I have made myself the occasion rather than the hero of my tale.

But though beguiling the passing hour was my first, it remained not to the last my only object. Had it done so, the task must at every stage of its progress have produced its fulfilment. Content every evening with having lessened the listlessness or the pangs of another day by an additional chapter of my journal, I should at no one period of my memoirs have regarded the chance of their being cut short by the great radical cure of all lassitude and all pain, ere the account of my active life had been brought to a close, as a subject of apprehension. I should rather, on the contrary, have sought so to spin out my slender materials, as to be certain of becoming independent of the occupation ere the occupation forsook me: unfortunately, whatever task we have long pursued ends by inspiring us either with unspeakable disgust or with immoderate affection: and the latter I find to be my fate. Having proceeded thus far unchecked in my narrative, I should now with regret leave it truncated: I now feel anxious to bring it down to that decisive day which saw me placed at last in a situation no longer liable to changes worth recording.

Even vanity, perhaps—that passion which represents the forgetfulness of the world as the direst of calamities, and makes man prefer the most cruel persecution itself to peaceful obscurity—may add its secret impulse to my fear of leaving the portraiture of my actions an imperfect fragment: for too sensibly I feel that the deepest humiliations eradicate not entirely from the human breast that only permanent friend of humanity, which, when the more volatile desires, companions of youth and vigour, are chilled by age or warned off by infirmity, alone remains to warm and to support the sinking frame, and enables us, as it were, to survive ourselves, by living in the past and the future when the present begins to elude our feeble grasp: and though I can only expect in my present circumstances to have for my readers those strangers of the West, who from their distant corner of the globe watch the inhabitants of its more genial zones as children do a worm, to wonder at its motions, and to thank God they do not resemble it—yet a place even in their memory seems preferable to entire oblivion; and even to them I wish ere I die to say, “I too lived, I too strutted my day

on the stage of the world, and, like others, I too had my puppets to play with." Nay, lest I should, to these curious dissectors who only prize a dead body in proportion as while alive it exhibited diseases more strange and monstrous, appear a subject too sound for their investigation, I have perhaps even exaggerated rather than extenuated my infirmities, and kept my better qualities in the background, as things of no value except to the owner.

Thus become more anxious every day to bring my story to its final conclusion, and at the same time warned more forcibly every hour that unless I increase my speed, my illness, advancing with more rapid strides than my pen, must bring my life to a close ere my tale is achieved, I feel, that to ensure my attaining the goal, I must tarry less time on the road; and, therefore, as my sojourn in the distant regions which I have just described forms but an insulated period in my existence, little connected with what precedes, and still less so with what follows—except in as far as by breaking through old and evil habits, it afforded an interval for reflection, and made me re-enter my former haunts with new feelings and a mind matured and chastened—I shall hie me from the desert, and return to civilized society with the least possible delay.

Suffice it, therefore, to say, with regard to the great schemes meditated by the Wahabees, that whatever might be their purport, I beheld not their execution. Suleiman's crafty kehaya, informed of my stay among these sectaries, and aware of the advantage they might derive from my counsels, hastened to effect the greatest injury his enmity could do me—that of making me appear his friend. So ingeniously was the bearer of a letter from the miscreant, fraught with whatever might give my conduct the appearance of treachery towards my employers, made to fall into their hands, that Abd-ool-azeez could not refrain from summoning me before him to vindicate my innocence, or to suffer for my crime. My punishment was to consist in utter expulsion from the tribe whose countenance I had forfeited. Former hospitality forbade severer penalties.

Had my Aïsché, by still possessing life and health, promised to cheer my waning days with many an increasing blessing, even simple banishment might have seemed an infliction sufficiently severe. Become used to the manners of the Wahabees, I could, with my somewhat anxious but yet affectionate wife, gladly have ended

my days where I had most unexpectedly found friends, a family, and a home. One object had, indeed, by degrees so entwined itself in my imagination with all my future schemes of felicity, as to have become its indispensable condition in whatever abode I might choose; and this was my darling child, my Alexis: but him I had purposed soon to send for; and then—forgetting and forgotten in the land of my birth—I might without repining resign my breath among strangers, and leave my worthless bones to whiten in the desert.

But far differently now stood the case. Aïsché was no more, and I again become the lone mortal I first had entered these distant realms. Since the severing of the strong ties that bound me to their rulers, the secret wish of again joining my Alexis on his native soil had gained such entire possession of my breast, that I no longer could see the least pleasure in any other scheme. To return to the only being in this world whom I could call my own, to bestow upon him that paternal care which he thus far had never known, to cherish him in my long-estranged bosom, and to render him the sole and permanent solace of my remaining days, was henceforth the only happiness after which I thirsted; and under the influence of this all-subduing feeling, I almost hailed Achmet's fraud as a fortunate event—as a circumstance which, by causing me to be banished from the desert for hostile intentions harboured against the Wahabees long ere I had experienced their kindness, might spare me the pain of appearing in contempt of all gratitude to leave them from choice, after all their best gifts had been showered on my head.

When, therefore, the charge of treachery was preferred against me, when the kehaya's letter was read, and when my expected defence kept every breath suspended, every eye intently gazing, and every neck on the stretch, I only answered the accusation with sullen and haughty silence: but if that very strangeness of my behaviour made Abdool-azeez doubt my guilt, and Omar loudly assert my innocence—it left the one without power to absolve, and the other without means of detaining me. They suffered the wayward stranger to depart from among them, and I disdainfully went on my ways: taking with me only—a few endearing recollections excepted—the little I had brought. My course lying westward, I proceeded at once in that direction; and * * *

[In this place the manuscript leaves us to regret the loss of a few pages, which have been either cancelled by the author himself, or torn out by strange hands after his death. The interruption, however, seems to be of little consequence: the text, where it recommences, shows Anastasius moving on a new but not very distant stage, and describing only a different Arab tribe from that among which—as he himself says—he found, and again lost, a friend, a wife, and a home.]

It is—he resumes—the most numerous and powerful of those which reside in the interior of the Hedjas. Its principal schaiçh can singly bring into the field an army of upwards of three thousand horse, well armed and well equipped: nearly twenty inferior schaiçhs acknowledge him as their supreme lord; and the great schaiçh of the tribe of Anahssé, who resides at Keibar in the Nedjd, never fails, in any expedition worthy of their joint powers, to assist him with a numerous division of his choicest troops.

By means of this union of strength, the Arabs of the Harb find themselves enabled to mock the sultan, whenever he still tries to revive his obsolete claims to the sovereignty of that province; and for the permission to lead the pilgrims through its trackless sands on their journey to Mekkah, they exact from his representative, the pasha of Damascus, a yearly fine, which this vizier fails not in his turn to charge to the account of the Porte.

Djezzar, in the year 1794, still reigning governor of Damascus as well as of Acre, persuaded himself that a double escort would carry him across the Hedjas more usefully and more agreeably than the payment of this impost; and when the schaiçhs of the desert presented themselves on his passage to claim the customary toll, they only received an insulting refusal. Unprepared for compulsory measures, they were for the moment obliged to abide the indignity; but early the next season the schaiçhs of the Harb and of Anahssé quitted their abodes of Keibar and of Khaff to watch in their camps the opportunity for joint and just revenge.

The annual march of the hadj is so regular, the different stations where it halts are so exactly determined, the day and hour of its passing through every district on its route vary so little, that whatever Bedoween may have any suits to settle with any of his divisions, need only consult their own convenience as to the time and place. They may stop the caravan according to their pleasure, either in its coming or its return, and of the far-stretching string of pilgrims they may select for their respondents

Just whatever part they think most likely to afford them both easy and ample satisfaction. .

On this present occasion, the caravan was suffered, in its outward march, to reach Mekkah unmolested, in order that, on its return, a presumptuous security might render it an easier prey. Khedieh, a town situated two days' journey from Medineh, was fixed upon as the spot most favourable for the meditated surprise; and as the pilgrims always make a three days' halt at Medineh, in order to pay their devotions at the prophet's tomb, the day on which they were to arrive in that city was that of our departure from our different stations to meet near Khedieh.

The emir's own division was the foremost to arrive at the place of rendezvous. It took post behind a small hill, whose summit afforded every convenience for watching the approaching hadj, and whose reverse was equally well adapted for concealing our own force. Emissaries were immediately despatched to reconnoitre, and to report at what distance the pilgrims might still be.

Meantime the emir went about giving his last instructions to his troops. "Remember!" said he, "we only wish to obtain our dues from an unjust vizier; not to injure a set of unoffending hadjees. Therefore—attack property—but spare lives. Direct your chief efforts where you see the most merchandise, and the fewest soldiers. Useless shedding of blood should be avoided. If we kill the Osmanlees, who will hereafter want our camels?"

This excellent advice seemed for once fated to be thrown away. The scouts sent out had advanced but a very little way before they returned utterly dismayed, and already from a distance making signs of bad news. As soon as within hearing, "All is lost," they cried. "Djezzar pushed on from Medineh the very day of his arrival. While we stand here waiting for the miscreant, he is already gone by—laughing, no doubt, at our suffering ourselves to be twice deceived by his wiles. Perhaps from some eminence you may still have the satisfaction of seeing the rear of his force just slinking out of sight!"

At these provoking words the emir immediately galloped off at full speed to a commanding height, about half a mile distant. Most of us followed. Arrived within a few yards of the summit we dismounted, and, crouching down, advanced among the bushes. .

In an instant all conjecture was at an end. Along the furthestmost outskirts of the boundless plain still remained clearly discernible the long dark line of close-wedged pilgrims, winding their weary way through the white sands like a black and slender millipede, whose anterior extremity already has entered some crevice, while the thousand legs of the body and tail still move in sight. Ere, however, the other detachments not yet arrived had joined our force, it would have been foolhardiness to pursue the enemy; and after we were all collected, it would be too late to overtake his flying troops. So adieu all our hopes! A bird's-eye view of the fleeting caravan was the reward of our mighty preparations.

At this sight a deep gloom overspread the emir's countenance. He struck his spear with fury into the ground, convulsively grasped the long braid of black hair which hung over his shoulders, and, after musing a while—his eyes all the time fiercely rolling in his head, "Let us return," he cried, "to our homes; and after having sounded the trump of war through the desert, hush, if we can, the irksome echo!"

Down the hill he now again rushed, and after him all his followers, heaping every variety of malediction upon that vile Djezzar, who, against all rule and precedent, had hurried on where no pasha had ever hurried on before; and that, too, merely to give us the slip.

Just as we got to the bottom of the hill came scrambling up to meet us the last of our scouts. We cared so little for a fresh confirmation of our disappointment, that ere the man had time to unclose his lips, we desired him not to take the trouble of delivering his message, and this the more, as he seemed to carry a face of joy, which we thought exceedingly ill timed, and for which the emir gave him a sharp and proper rebuke. Long, therefore, did he struggle, and many fruitless attempts did he make, before he could convey to our understandings that he really brought good news—and this was its purport.

The pasha of Damascus, goaded by his evil conscience, had indeed escaped our vengeful clutches; but the bey of Egypt remained after him at Medineh, and was to escort back part of the way, in addition to his Cairo caravan, a great portion of that of Syria, which, wholly unprepared for Djezzar's diligence, had been left in the care of El-ashkar. The number of pilgrims would thus be nearly the same as before, and that of troops alone

sensibly diminished; but this reduction, though it might leave the emir fewer laurels to gather, he could contemplate with becoming philosophy. Out, therefore, he poured his whole weight of anxiety in one single long-protracted sigh of relief and of joy; and scarce was it brought to a conclusion, when all the different divisions of our allies still wanting arrived in sight at once. We now spent the night in delightful expectations, and the next morning stationed ourselves in ambush behind a range of low hills, a few hundred yards from the track of the looked-for caravan.

According to immemorial custom, the Magarbis, or men from the West—in other words the Barbaresques—in going, form the rear, and in returning, the van of the Cairo hadj. Loaded with arms, and light of baggage, they were deemed unworthy the honour of our notice. So far from attempting to stop these honest gentlemen, apt to deal in no weighty article save blows, we on the contrary wished Heaven might speed them on their way. Even the lofty Osman himself, who came next with his kehayas, his body-guard, and his remaining troops, we permitted to pass unmolested; though I longed to break one more lance with some of my old Cairo cronies: but when the great fat merchants, who kept aloof even from their own escort—as much feared by them as any Arabs—in their turn were seen to approach, panting with heat, and in a cluster formed for the very purpose that we might lay hands upon it and seize it at one grasp, the eyes of our men glistened with joy, and my fingers began to itch like those of a physician at sight of his fee. In the interval between the passing on of worthless fry which preceded, and the approach of these men of substance, we sprang forward, and posting ourselves in the middle of the way, cut off the rear completely from the body of the caravan, and called to our friends to stop and be rifled. At the shouts of terror occasioned by this little compliment, it is said that the great Ashkar himself disdained not to turn round his head, in order to inquire the cause: of which being duly informed, he valiantly clapped his stirrups to his horse, and set off at full speed;—all his veterans gallantly followed the example of their chief.

Thus abandoned by their defenders, the pilgrims only sought to save their persons, and left their property to its fate. In less than five minutes the whole field of

battle was strewed with camels, horses, and mules, laden with every sort of goods. We had nothing to do but to gather the manna showered around by Providence. Every man seized upon what was nearest to him, and when two or three happened to pull at the same parcel, they drew their sabres and divided the bundle fraternally.

Where predatory expeditions like the present were considered as legitimate, as honourable, as praiseworthy, not only in the leaders of tribes, but in their humblest followers; where each successful robbery only conferred fresh distinction on its authors; where every wayfaring man resigned himself beforehand to the chance of being despoiled, and the sufferer regretted his loss without blaming his assailant, I carried not my scruples of honesty so far as alone to deny myself a share in the common privilege: but it was my folly on this occasion to be fastidious in its exercise. I would not strip a poor pedlar or a hadjee in humble trim. All the ordinary pickings I haughtily passed by, and abandoned with a look of contempt to the greedier Arabs. Indeed, I did worse: to my eternal shame be it spoken, I assisted two or three wretches in making their escape, after helping them to lift up their bundles. At the same time I felt no very insurmountable objection to some single rich prize falling in my way, rather than in that of a parcel of vagabonds who would not know its value. Unfortunately, I proceeded on so far in my desultory ramble—disdaining every unimportant gift of fortune which I met—that at last I met nothing more, got clean out of the track of the plunder, and fell in with no further booty either great or small.

I now began to repent me of my squeamishness. Small prizes after all were better than blanks; and it happened, not unfrequently, that a pilgrim's tattered garments concealed a perfectly whole purse. This reflection would have urged me to retrace my steps backward, but that I was sure of no longer finding even what I had left untouched. While my time had been spent in idle promenading, there was little doubt that the field must have been gleaned by my more industrious companions unto the last ear.

Precisely, however, when I thought all chance of doing any good entirely gone by, fortune was pleased to reward my forbearance. In an interstice between two

small hillocks, which suddenly opened upon my view, appeared at the head of a string of camels heavily laden, a well-mounted merchant, only intent upon rejoining the hindmost troop of the bey's soldiers, just diving into a hollow before him.

I cried to the diligent hadjee to stop, and to deliver up his property—and thus addressed, he thought fit to look round; but seeing me quite alone, he only answered, "I was welcome to whatever I could take,"—and spurred on his horse with all his might and main. He judged rightly enough, that unsupported as I was, I could scarce be deemed a match for six or eight sturdy and well-armed fellows, who, while he spoke, sprung forth from behind his towering camels, and, grinning from ear to ear at their master's ready wit, showed me with their white teeth the black muzzles of their guns. This sight somewhat cooled the ardour of my pursuit: from a full gallop I fell into a canter, and from that into a trot, until at last I pulled up entirely, and, puzzled how to act, stood a while stock still, not liking to advance, and not less averse to retiring empty handed.

Fortunately, at that moment came up from the eastward a troop of ten or twelve Arabs, belonging to a tribe usually buried in the deepest sands of the desert. These gentry had not originally participated in our plan of attacking the hadj, had only heard of the scheme by accident, and had advanced beyond their usual beat, on the mere chance of what they might pick up. With the utmost alacrity they consented, on seeing my dilemma, to lend me their assistance; while the merchant's escort, perceiving this reinforcement, at once passed from a show of the utmost resolution to that of the most dastardly fear. In their confusion, these brave guardians of the property committed to their care fired from behind their four-footed battery one single volley—just to exasperate their pursuers—and then scampered off with all their might, leaving me in undisturbed possession of the goods and chattels which their master had before most formally made over to me, in the presence of reputable witnesses.

Luckily, I had to divide the richest prize of the caravan with the most ignorant Arabs of the desert. My associates in this excellent affair only valued goods according to their bulk and weight. The refuse articles, the outside envelopes—coarse cottons, clumsy shalcoons,

stuffs like packing cloth, and trinkets like horse trappings—were what they chiefly coveted. The shawls fine as cobwebs, the muslins thin as gossamer, the silks like summer clouds, they held in utter contempt. A bag of pearls from the Ormus bank, of the size of full-grown filberts, they tasted; but finding them hard and insipid, they flung the good-for-nothing vetches away, and left them for me to thrust in my bundle. In like manner, when—searching about for the pearls which had dropped out—I picked up a little casket which lay by itself on the ground, and seemed to have been lost only from a special anxiety to save it, my tasteful friends, who saw nothing in the oriental rubies and diamonds—none in truth much larger than myrtle-berries—of which it was brimful, but a parcel of glass beads fit only for children, let me keep them in exchange for a huge bale of calicoes. In consequence of these two lucky hits, I became so generous in the division of the remainder of the spoil, that, grave as the party seemed by nature, they could not help smiling at my folly; and I have no doubt that some facetiousness on the subject would have come out in due time but for the fear which haunted my companions of being observed, treated by the emir's followers as interlopers, and made to give an account of their capture. This rather serious consideration now rendered them anxious to be gone, and with good wishes to me, and significant glances at each other, they sped away.

I myself was not sorry to find a secluded nook safe from intrusion, in which to take the first inventory of my newly-acquired riches. When I opened them, and took a full survey of the treasure I possessed, I fell upon my knees, and devoutly thanked Providence for having made the merchant to whom I owed it a wag, and inspired him with a witticism which, without being particularly good in itself, was nevertheless a most happy one for me, whom it enabled to keep the property acquired with a safe conscience. This act of devout gratitude performed, I neatly inserted my baubles between the folds of my belt and the plaits of my turban; and thus safe from the danger of exciting envy, went back to our party, trailing after me, with great apparent exertion, an enormous bundle of very ordinary goods, over which I most pitifully bemoaned my ill luck, which, among such a variety of rich plunder, had left me nothing else to make prize of.

My present opulence would alone have sufficed to renew my yearnings after more polished regions, had I felt none before. Undoubtedly poverty was easiest to be borne among the poor; but with a pocket full of Ormus pearls, who could live upon dry locusts? especially when possessing in the west, as I did, a little treasure far more precious than diamonds and pearls, which the gems I had gained would enable me to adorn like the little jewel of my heart. The longing to return to Smyrna, already powerfully felt among the Wahabees, now increased to such a degree that the soil of the desert seemed to burn under my feet. My impression was, that unless I quitted it immediately, some insurmountable obstacle would inevitably keep me spellbound for the remainder of my life within its dreary precincts.

My companions, however, were not people to intrust with these feelings. They dealt not much in sentimentality, but had a notion of keeping in the desert things earned in the desert. With a proper respect for this prejudice I equipped myself as if only going to visit a neighbouring camp, and set out at a slow pace, in a careless and indolent manner: but, like a schoolboy who designs to play truant, I by degrees quickened my step, got into an easy trot, from that into a canter, and finally—as soon as I had turned the last corner from which I thought I could be watched—clapped my stirrups to my horse, and darted through the plain.

I had scarce performed three leagues, when a little way before me appeared a personage whose accoutrement belonged not to the desert, and who in fact proved to be a hadjee separated from his companions by the discomfiture of the morning. I spurred on to join the stranger, as he did with all his might and main to avoid me. At last, finding his pursuer gain ground fast upon him, he looked back, and without stopping or taking the least aim, fired at me both his pistols. Neither of them fortunately bore within thirty yards of the mark: but I took the will for the deed, and ran at the uncourteous pilgrim with my couched spear. He escaped the shock by his alacrity in ducking. Not choosing to waste my powder, or to alarm the desert, I hereupon drew my dagger. My hadjee now assumed a most piteous and supplicating posture. "Crush not," he cried, "the insect that crawls in the dust. It was fright alone made me fire. I never show the least symptom of bravery except when

half dead with fear!"—The defence made me laugh: "Take your life," said I, "but give up your money." "Alas!" replied the hadjee, "what money would you have me possess?—I, that am contracted for. I visit the holy places as proxy only for a rich man, who bargained not to pay me, unless he saw me return safe and sound." The excuse was ingenious; but my friend proved to have a purse of his own notwithstanding, and I doubted a while whether I should not take the money which, by his own account, he did not want, and the pistols he knew not how to use: but the ample fortune which I had just acquired enabled me to disdain the paltry prize. So I wished the *insect* well through the deep sands—and resumed my former pace.

Unwilling to travel close on the heels of the caravan which I had helped to lighten of its burthen, I determined to lean rather more to the left, and to steer towards Acre, in preference to Damascus. Long, therefore, was the journey, and many were the perils, and much was I beholden to the swiftness of my horse, even though I only travelled in the nighttime. Sometimes I had a guide; at others the stars alone directed my course. On so long and solitary a journey, and with so few objects to amuse my eye, endless were the schemes I formed in my mind. But first and foremost was—laugh not, reader, if you can help it—that of becoming inflexibly honest!

When arrived within half a day's journey of Acre, I considered in what shape I might best meet the gaze of cities. Constant alarms and fatigues had so altered my appearance that it was impossible to know me. My eyes were sunk in their sockets, and my bones starting through the skin. By contriving on the road to run my lance through my foot I had produced a wound, and this wound was become so inflamed that it made a halt an indispensable condition to the cure. At the same time, in the residence of the conductor of the late hadj, whose attention I had once before attracted at Damascus by cropping a friar's beard, some disguise seemed advisable. The character of a Bedoween my long features and unguttural accent scarce allowed me to support, especially among men familiar with the idiom. I determined upon the part of a Turkish santon.* Its sacred garb would

* Turkish Santon—or itinerant saint, of the sort that travel about, living upon the credulity and superstition of the lower orders.

enable me at once to avoid the inconveniences of poverty and the suspicion of wealth. The transformation was speedily effected. I pushed on again, and soon reached Acre—just two years from the day on which I left Bagdad.

The first face I met in the city appeared short of its nose—I had witnessed that deficiency elsewhere. The next was minus an eye—that too is sometimes seen in other countries; but the third had no ears, the fourth no lips; and there seemed to be walking about as many people possessed of one hand only as of two. At last, meeting a man whom I was not afraid to question on this local singularity, inasmuch as—by some singular piece of good luck apparently—he still retained the possession of his full set of limbs and features, I civilly accosted him, expressed my joy at seeing his eyes, ears, nose, mouth, &c. all complete; and finally begged to ask how it had happened that this occurrence was so rare at Acre?

“You are a stranger,” answered the man, “and know not yet, it seems, the mark of our master—it is by these peculiarities that our shepherd knows his flock. Saint as you appear, let me advise even you, in this place, to take care of your ears.”

I thanked my informer for his friendly caution; and fearing that Djezzar might take it into his head to set his ugly mark upon some part of my thus far at least un mutilated person, I chose for my unwilling abode the obscurest hole I could find. There I only made the few pious grimaces, and performed the few miraculous cures, which I could not possibly avoid in support of my character. My healing powers, however, like those of most sainted personages, proved very little convertible to my own use. Amid all the bedevilled whom I exorcised, and all the epileptics whom I *unfitted*, my own wound healed very slowly; and I had full time to hear, ere I got well upon my legs again, the history of the abominable Djezzar, which I am glad to introduce, only to get rid for a few pages of that eternal I which haunts all the rest of my narrative.

CHAPTER XVI.

BOSNIA brought forth the monster since most appropriately surnamed el Djezzar, or the Butcher. Born a Christian, and bred a carpenter, young Dimitri first signalized himself by slaying his brother. This feat compelled him to fly from his country; but as gratitude is the characteristic of noble minds, and as one of the implements of Dimitri's trade had been the instrument of his fratricide, he in after-times remembered the axe which had opened his way to greatness, and to his other titles added that of Abool-balta, or father of the axe. The place in which he first sought refuge was that sink of every vice, and asylum of every miscreant, the capital. On the road he had subsisted by begging; on his arrival he sold himself as a slave. His flaxen hair and fair complexion suited the Cairo market. Aly-bey became his purchaser. Converted to Islamism, and called by the name of Achmet, our hero soon distinguished himself by his proficiency in magic;* and under the guidance of Egypt's ambitious ruler, this art remained not in Achmet's hands an idle pursuit; it afforded him the means of conjuring away with more adroitness such as had either disobliged, or had obliged the bey too much. Many heavy debts of gratitude were thus cancelled in a way which left the conferrers no possibility of complaining. For these services Aly-bey first created Achmet a kiachef, and next, governor of the Bahairé. It was in this province that one single year's exploits were sufficient to acquire for him the title of Djezzar; but his patron, conceiving some suspicions of his fidelity, ended not the less that year by destining for the Butcher himself that reward which, through his means, he had conferred on so many others. Informed of his danger, Achmet now a second time fled for his life. He found a hospitable reception at the court of Osman, pasha of Damascus. This vizier was waging war at the time

* He soon distinguished himself by his proficiency in magic—an art believed in by all the mamlukes, and cultivated by many.

against the Arab Daher, by inheritance prince of the small territory of Saphad, and by conquest ruler of the larger district of Acre—dismembered from the pashalik of Seïde. He sent Djezzar against the successful enemy at the head of a troop of his own countrymen—of Bosniaques: but in spite of their valour and achievements, the Butcher could not prevent Daher from at last rendering Seïde itself an appendage to Acre, as Acre had formerly been to Seïde.

A singular race, inserted between the sea on one side and Mount Lebanon on the other, owns allegiance to the government of Seïde. Its name is Deroozi; its capital Dair-el-Khammar, or the city of the moon; and its religion a remnant of the theology of the ancient Magi. In their schools, the initiated, as I am told, were taught that all things sensible and intellectual emanated from a single first essence; that the souls of particular individuals—brute or human—were only so many different lesser portions detached from this primal essence through an act of its own volition; that, deprived on their first separation of their former consciousness, these lesser divisions of the great Whole were only awakened to different degrees of partial knowledge through means of the different species of bodily envelopes which it pleased the supreme Essence, their parent, successively to weave around them; that the apparent removal and transmigration of these distinct souls only arose from the formation and decay of the various bodies by which they were in turns occupied; and finally, that as all things sensible and intellectual first emanated from a single primary essence, so all things were ultimately again, after a vast circle of vicissitudes and developments—each rising in perfection beyond every former one—to be reabsorbed into that primary essence, and made partakers of its unbounded knowledge, and power, and glory. It must, however, be owned, that if the knowing ones among the other sects prevailing in Syria pretend to trace in the belief of the Deroozi the wrecks of this high and ancient doctrine, the vulgar herd of the Mohammedans and Christians of that province, loath to burthen their intellects with such subtleties, cut the matter short by asserting the creed of the Deroozi to be the exact reverse of that of every other nation, and averring, that whatever others abominate these pagans hold in reverence, and whatever others regard as sacred they treat as execrable; and, strange to

tell, the Deroozi themselves, who might be expected to know best of any the truth, and to possess, though no one else did, the secret of their own doctrine, live in utter and contented ignorance on the subject. Among this singular nation, not only religious practices, but religious creed—not only rites, worship, offerings, fasts, and prayers, but doctrine and faith—remain exclusively confined to a peculiar caste, named akkhals, or sanctified: in whose society none can be admitted that have not previously given up all worldly concerns, and completely renounced the interests, the occupations, and the converse of the seculars. It is these who exclusively take upon themselves the faith, and hold themselves responsible for the salvation of the whole community; and while they are so jealous of their knowledge that they suffer no secular, even of their own nation, to be initiated in their dogmas, they are so intolerant in their dogmas themselves that they admit no individual of any other race to the salvation exclusively reserved for their own nation. In vain would a stranger wish to subscribe to their doctrine, or desire to be received into their community. The gates of eternal bliss remain not the less shut against him for ever. He might during the whole of his life profess the religion of the Deroozi with unremitting zeal; still must he at his death, like the infidel he was born, be forbidden their higher heaven, and only go to whatever less enviable place is reserved for the remainder of his unenlightened race.

As to the seculars, called by the priests djahels or simples, they are all, from the prince down to the peasant, held alike exempt from the performance of religious practices, and from the profession of religious tenets. The emir, or sovereign of the nation, is not more than the meanest of his subjects admitted by the akkhals to the mysteries of their belief or to the secrets of their worship; but having no rites or doctrine of their own, the Deroozi laymen are the more ready to adopt, in respect to externals, those of whatever more powerful nation it is their policy to court; whence their town and villages are filled with mosques which the inhabitants never enter except when visited by a Turk.

Among the Deroozi, as among the Arabs, every subject is a citizen, and every lay-citizen a soldier. Military exercises are reckoned by this warlike nation the highest of pleasures, and contempt of death the first of virtues.

Each district of their country obeys the commands, or rather enjoys the protection, of an hereditary schaich, who with the utmost simplicity of manners usually combines the loftiest pride of birth; and while he excludes no one from his table, deems very few worthy of his alliance. Among these families, that of Schebab enjoys the privilege of supplying the general ruler of the nation, who, chosen by his brother-chiefs, takes the title of emir, and resides at Dair-el-Khammar. His authority is limited, and on every affair of consequence he consults the other chiefs.

To the north of the land of the Deroози lies the country of the Mawarnee or Maronites, called Kesrowan, and divided like the former into lesser districts, governed by hereditary schaichs. This province pays allegiance to the emir of the Deroози, who holds it of the pasha of Tra-bloos, as he does his own district of the pasha of Seïde. The character and mode of living of the Maronites only differ from those of the Deroози in a very few particulars, such as must naturally arise from the Christian religion they profess, and the communication they have with the sea through the port of Bayroot. The inhabitants of the Kesrowan display greater industry, and possess more skill in business than their neighbours the Deroози: and thence the Deroози schaichs generally choose Maronites as stewards to their estates and preceptors to their children; the difference of creed forming a less weighty objection where the tutor is only called upon to abstain from inculcating in his pupil any religious belief whatsoever.

Emir Melhem, one of their rulers of whom the Deroози speak with the most veneration, was among the few men who wish to leave an interval between the pride of sovereignty and the nothingness of the grave. He abdicated his worldly power, left the society of the djahels, and among the akhlals commenced preparing his soul for its higher flight about four years previous to its release from its earthly shackles. His brother Mansoor was by the schaichs of Dair-el-Khammar named regent of the Deroози until his son Youssoof should come of age; but Youssoof saw himself, through the interest of Sad-el-Koori his guardian—a Maronite of the noble family of the Awakri—immediately recognised as ruler of the Kesrowan. Of this honour the young prince appeared fully worthy. In the course of a single campaign he conquered and reannexed to his province the district of Djebaïl,

long dismembered from it by a horde of Scheyee Moslemen, called Mootaweelis, living on the reverse of Mount Lebanon, in the fertile plain of Baaïlbet.

Military renown thus adding its support to his hereditary rights, Youssoof early claimed the sovereignty of the Deroozi, with such means of enforcing his pretensions as Mansoor, his uncle, thought it prudent not to disregard. Clothing necessity in the garb of virtue, this chief professed only to have held the supreme authority in trust for his nephew, and in 1770 solemnly placed on Youssoof's finger the seal of the reigning sovereign.

This event took place while Daher, prince of Acre, was pursuing his conquests in Syria. Not satisfied with taking Seïde, he at last laid siege to Bayroot, the seaport of the Kesrowan, to which Djezzar had retreated before him. The Butcher succeeded in driving back the Arab; but instead of restoring Bayroot to Youssoof, its rightful prince, for whom he had undertaken to defend the place, he now declared he only held it in trust for the sultan; and with Youssoof's treasures, deposited in it for safety, bought the investiture for himself. When, soon after, Hassan capitan-pasha drove Daher out of Acre and Seïde, he was prevailed upon to confer the whole of these pashalike on Djezzar, in recompense for his loyalty.

Following the example of his Arab predecessor, Djezzar made Acre his residence in preference to Seïde. The place was capable of an easier defence both on the sea and the land side. Nor did he only give it strength; he also added beauty. The splendid relics of Tyre and Cæsarea were employed to adorn its new erections; and soon arose within Acre's turreted walls a palace, a mosque, a bazaar, and a bath, whose architecture, achieved as if by magic, seemed worthy of the Devas.

But joy was banished from these gorgeous edifices. Djezzar's rapacity suffered it to enter neither the hovels of the little nor the conacks of the great. By converting every source of wealth into an article of monopoly, he kept his subjects poor, while he measured out his taxes as if he suffered them to grow rich; and when his cupidity by its excess defeated its own purpose, it was in acts of refined cruelty that he sought his consolation. Every rising sun saw the torture applied; every day that passed was marked by fresh executions. The tyrant's glittering galleries re-echoed only with moans, his polished pavements were moistened with tears, and his

marble terraces seemed adorned with crystal rills, only in order that their pure waters might wash away the streams of blood with which they daily were crimsoned. The wailings of the tortured mixed themselves with the murmur of the fountains; and from behind the porphyry and jasper panels of Djeddar's wide-extending porticoes were heard the groans of wretches expiring immured within their unrelenting walls.

According to the immemorial custom of all eastern despots, their treasure and their wives are kept in the same enclosure, under the same ponderous bolts. The sacredness of the gynecæum is rendered subservient to the security of the harem. In Djeddar's intended palace and citadel, however, a greater excess of distrust had chosen a still more mysterious spot for Plutus's sanctuary; the most internal recesses of the Butcher's harem only formed the outermost entrance of the receptacle where lay concealed his gold. Strength without and secrecy within guarded this holy of holies. High ramparts, deep fosses, and bulwarks bristling with cannon surrounded the sacred cells, and dark subterraneous passages only led to them by the most intricate windings. Of these Djeddar alone possessed both the design and the key. Never had their hapless artificers been permitted to return to the daylight which they quitted to build them; and their knowledge and their bodies still reposed within their fatal works. While none of the officers of the palace durst follow Djeddar into his harem, none of the tenants of the harem itself were suffered to cast after him the slightest look of inquiry, when, like a threatening meteor, he rushed by his women, darted through their numerous chambers, and vanished at last in the mysterious labyrinth that led to his treasure.

Djedjar was a barbarous husband as well as a merciless master. His mamlukes, therefore, succeeded in opening a correspondence with his wives, for the purpose of procuring his death and dividing his spoil. No one knows what foe to humanity betrayed the well-concerted plot: all saw too soon that Djeddar knew his danger. Infuriate, he rushed into his harem, and for a while stabbed indiscriminately all he met in his way. But soon he regretted the too easy death vouchsafed to the first victims of his rage, and caused the remainder to envy, by the tortures he made them endure, the milder fate of their predecessors. His own hands, it is said, submitted to the

rack those charms in which he had rioted by preference, and the greatness of the raptures he had tasted became the measure of the pangs he inflicted.

Even the seclusion and the thick walls of the women's chambers could not stifle the cries of so many suffering wretches. The mamlukes heard, and guessed their own impending fate. Immediately they rose, stormed the batteries which surrounded the sanctuary, and, mastering their crested summits, pointed its own cannon against the fortress and against the relentless tyrant wading in blood within its precincts.

Unable to make his escape without falling into the hands of his enemies, Djeddar now plunged into the deepest recesses of his treasury. There he shut himself in with his boards; and there alone, and without the smallest chance of any other mortal following to assist or to defend him, to bring him intelligence or take his orders, he remained stretched on his heaps of gold, in expectation of every instant being discovered, and dragged out at once to light and to death.

An hour was thus spent by the mamlukes in incessant firing, and by Djeddar in indescribable anguish. That period elapsed, the fire of the assailants began to slacken and to leave longer pauses, until by degrees the report of musketry entirely ceased, and even the roar of cannon only was heard at distant periods. At last all din of arms subsided in a dead and awful silence. Djeddar no longer doubted that the harem was forced, and the mamlukes only employed in seeking the hidden entrance of his last retreat. Every instant their approaching footsteps seemed to vibrate nearer on his ear; and thus he spent another hour in still greater agony than the first.

The continued tranquillity, however, now began to cast upon his mind a gleam of hope. With watchful ear and cautious tread he crept forth—but first only a few paces beyond the inmost vault; by degrees, a little farther into the winding galleries; and at last, unto the very verge of the forbidden precincts. There, having again listened a while at the grated door without being able to perceive any sound, he ventured to open the ponderous jaws of the iron gate; and finally, with breath suspended and faltering steps, he again issued forth into the realms of light.

Here the various chambers of the harem were the first he re-entered; but in them he only beheld, still exposed

to all the garish glare of day, the mangled carcasses he had left. All was silent: and but for the pale corpses lying about, all was solitary! No living being—neither foe nor domestic—presented himself on the Butcher's way in these his well-stocked shambles; until, bursting forth from their enclosure, he all at once beheld, marshalled in two long rows at its entrance and hailing him with loud acclamations, his faithful Bosniaques. This chosen band was the tyrant's bulwark against the just wrath of his remaining subjects. Having fallen on the mamlukes and forced them to retire, its chiefs were waiting for their master's appearance to acquaint him with his safety and the flight of the rebels. The greatest part of these ill-fated men were afterward slain in a pitched battle near Seïde.

Meanwhile, Osman, pasha of Damascus, had died, and Mehemed, Osman's eldest son and successor, had been poisoned by Derwish, his younger brother. Djezzar, possessed of more troops and more money than Derwish, now bullied the sultan and bribed the ministers into giving him the investiture of that important government. Still, however, only considering Damascus as a precarious possession, and Acre as a sort of patrimony, the Butcher continued to make the place of his creation that of his habitual residence. His accession of power only enabled him to pursue more steadily his plan of weakening the Deroozi into gradual and complete subjection. The allegiance which the emir owed him as pasha of Seïde he made a pretence for interfering in all the affairs of the country; and whatever schaichs of Youssoof's family formed a cabal against their chief were always sure of support from Djezzar. Long, however, did Youssoof, in spite of this insidious conduct, forbear from open hostilities against the lord to whom he owed allegiance; but at last he found the only means to avoid ruin was to embrace rebellion. He rose up in arms against Djezzar, gave him battle, was defeated, and with the remnant of his army fled into the fastnesses of the Kesrowan, which had always preserved unimpaired their loyalty to Melhem's son.

Djezzar offered the prince a free pardon on condition of suing for it at Acre. Youssoof left his two sons, Sad-el-din and Selim, under the care of his trusty Maronites, and with his old preceptor Sad-el-koori, who still continued his adviser, went to the Butcher's court. He was

admitted, was caressed at first, was soon found fault with, was lured into a fresh semblance of mutiny, and with his faithful tutor was condemned to death. In vain the whole Kesrowan interceded for a beloved prince and for a respected countryman. Djezzar never forgave; and the prince and the tutor were led out to meet their doom.

It is reported, that on their way to the place of execution, Youssoof, seeing all his fair prospects end in a gibbet, could not refrain from reproaching his aged counsellor with having made him the victim of his own ambitious views. "But for you," he exclaimed, "I might have died of old age!" "Your father," answered the firmer Sad-el-koori, "charged me to make you live a sovereign. I may have erred in the means, but I too pay the penalty. I asked nothing from you when in power; I followed you when ruined; I accompany you in death. What more could I do?"

The prince burst into tears, embraced, and begged his tutor's pardon. They were hung side by side from the part of Acre's wall which faces Mount Lebanon; and Youssoof's last dying look fell on the blue mountains of his distant dominion.

During his persecution of Youssoof, Djezzar had annexed to the pashalik of Acre the district of Saphad, by the assassination of Daher's sons; the valley of Baalbeït, by the destruction of the Mootaweelis; and the territories of Tabarieh and Cæsarea, by the expulsion of the Arabs of Sakr. One place alone, in the very heart of Djezzar's new acquisitions—the poor and small district of Nabloos—derided all his efforts. Abóo-Djerrar, its schaich, nestled aloft in his inexpugnable castle of Sannoor, preserved his independence amid his subdued neighbours; and it is said that his sturdy resistance gave Djezzar more pain than all his other successes could afford him pleasure.

Djezzar had, however, now attained that degree of power and independence which induced the Porte to send him alternately avowed favours and concealed daggers. The former were all duly acknowledged, and, by some unlucky chance, the latter never reached their destination. Their bearers disappeared, and, as usual, were no more inquired after. At last, a new device was struck out. According to one of those ancient customs held more sacred in Turkey than positive laws, the pasha of Tra-

bloos, who, on the pilgrims' return from Mekkah, brings them at a fixed place a supply of fresh provisions, only enjoys the honours of the two horse-tails, in order that his lesser rank may not clash with the pre-eminence of the emir-hadj. The year 1794 beheld the first exception to this rule. Geretly Hussein, ex-capitan-pasha and governor of Trabloos, went to meet the caravan, preceded by three tails. The circumstance looked suspicious. Djezzar saw in Geretly a personage qualified to step into his place. He determined to be beforehand with his entertainer, and sent him a jar, properly sealed, of the holy water from the well Zemzem. Geretly drank—and died!

It was for the fifth time that Djezzar, in his quality of pasha of Damascus, conducted the holy caravan to Mekkah, when, as related, he chose to defraud of their dues the children of Anahssé. I have already shown how they resented the injury, and how the offending leader escaped the avenging blow, contrived to make it miss his guilty head, and let it fall upon the innocent hadjees, by gliding from under the hand already lifted to strike. Djezzar arrived safe and sound at Damascus about the time I reached Acre; but he made so short a stay in the place, that, ere any one yet thought him near, he entered his own sea-girt capital.

A bomb, bursting in the middle of its assembled population, could not have spread at Acre a greater dismay than did Djezzar's arrival. Immediately every eye became fixed, every tongue tied, and every limb motionless and paralyzed, as if by the force of a fascination. None durst speak, or look, or even listen: for the fate of all Djezzar's enemies, cut off one after the other, made the vulgar believe in the supernatural powers he affected; while the wise dreaded what supplied the place of magic—spies who informed him of every thing, and agents who stopped at nothing.

For my own part, I no sooner heard in the evening that the Butcher had come in at one gate, than I prepared, a cripple as I still was, to take my departure the next morning at the other. But even this proved too great a delay. Just as I was slipping my last parcel of diamonds into my belt, in stepped a messenger of the pasha, to summon me before his master. I ran for my santon's cloak. "Spare yourself that trouble!" said the fellow; "we know you well enough; wary eyes watched

your proceedings, when at Khedieh you murdered the wealthy Djiaffer, and plundered his rich equipage!"

The most heinous part of this accusation certainly laboured under the defect of falsehood. Still it came too near the truth to leave me any hopes of escaping through the difference between the fact and fiction; especially with Djeddar for my arbitrator. The point therefore was, not to constitute him judge of the matter. With this view, "Your name, pray?" said I to the messenger.—"What can it signify?" cried he in answer. "I ask it as a favour," replied I. "Well, then, Mustapha Sakal," surlily rejoined the messenger.

"Mustapha Sakal!" I now exclaimed; "you are the very man I have been seeking. Know that, before I approached the poor dear dying Djiaffer—who never was killed in his life—in order to afford him in his misfortune what assistance I could render, he said to me in an unintelligible voice, 'Generous stranger, you look so honest that I must trust you with my last request. Seek, among the servants of the emir-hadj, for a youth of rare merit, named Mustapha, for whom I always entertained, unknown to himself, a particular regard; and give him in my name this valuable jewel.' I cannot doubt, O Mustapha Sakal! but you are the person. So take the gem. But as the emir-hadj is unreasonable enough to constitute himself universal legatee to all who die under his special protection, assist me to make my escape, lest in my dreams I should blab out your good luck."

The tehawoosh entered into the spirit of my tale, even beyond my intention. "It can only be," said he, taking the jewel without any ceremony, "from the total failure of his memory, that the worthy Djiaffer asserted my ignorance of his regard for my person, since, besides the bauble you give me, he promised me at his demise a hundred sequins, which no doubt you will pay me with equal readiness." "Truly," answered I—fearful there might be no end to the codicils—"he never mentioned the sequins; nor have I them to give."

The tehawoosh hereupon grew insolent. "Look in your belt," he cried, "and you will find them;" at the same time laying his broad fist upon me, and beginning to use violence. The question now seemed whether it might not be expedient to do by Mustapha what I had *not* done by Djiaffer; and while debating the thing in my

mind, I at all events grasped the dagger concealed under my saint's cloak—when all at once a loud noise was heard at the door. It boded Mustapha as little good as myself. Fearing that a second messenger might come to supersede him in his office, he turned as pale as ashes, and with a haggard look and wild gesture, "Off," he cried; "off to the mountains this instant!" I waited not a second bidding. Rushing by some person in the passage, whom I stopped not to look at, I was in a trice out of Acre, and in less than an hour out of sight of its loftiest towers;—having left my horse behind me as my hostage.

All the remainder of the day was spent in making the most of my way. Towards dusk I lay down among some bushes, slept a few hours, and, while yet the stars twinkled in the firmament, rose again, and performed several leagues, ere the sun opened to my right the purple gates of the morning. I made such speed that its setting saw me clear of Djazzar's dread dominions; for in recompense of his last frolic, the Porte had just taken from him the pashalic of Damascus, towards which I was travelling.

The next day, two leagues only from its capital, while pacing pretty smartly and quite wrapped up in thought, I felt myself suddenly slapped on the back by an arm of lead. Djazzar and his myrmidons still haunted my imagination; and without looking round, I set off at full speed, until a cry of—"Comrade, whither scampering so fast?" made me stop and face the enemy. He was not the most terrific in the world; and only appeared in the shape of a derwish with his sugar-loaf cap,* who laughed at my panic most outrageously.

I laughed in my turn, and in this merry mood we approached. "As one of the godly like myself," cried the derwish, "I was going to offer you hospitality in our convent at Damascus." I readily accepted an invitation which would prevent my being seen in public, and we proceeded on together.

Entering a small village on the road, my companion made a sudden stop. "Hark ye, comrade," said he; "a bright thought this minute strikes me. We are so near our journey's end, that without a little management we must stumble upon home before we are aware of it. Let us, therefore, make the most of what little time

* A derwish with his sugar-loaf cap—made of felt.

remains ours ; particularly as the sun is hot, and we have not, like the prophet, a canopy of angels to shelter us from its rays."

Upon this he lugged me, without waiting my answer, into the house of a Syriac Christian, where it seems he was well known. After saluting the party within, he boldly called for an okka of the best wine. I must have looked surprised, for he added, "It is to rub my limbs with, and bad stuff gives the cramp." The wine was brought, and set before us in a little back-room safe from unwelcome intrusion.

As soon as seated, "I have little faith," observed our derwish, "in external applications ; therefore, O my soul !" added he, in an emphatic tone, "bend all your thoughts upon heaven, lest you share in the defilement which, much against my will, I am going to inflict upon my body." And hereupon, carefully stroking up his whiskers, in order that they too should avoid partaking in the sin of his lips, he applied the vessel to his mouth, and most devoutly began his internal ablution. For some minutes he continued in this employment, with uplifted eyes and an appearance of entire abstraction ; until I at last began to think that he and the jug would part no more. This, however, finally happened, but with a long protracted sigh ; after which he handed the half empty vessel to me. The santou, therefore, easily finished what the derwish had begun ; and setting down the jar, I took up my staff to march out.

This movement was still premature. Making the most of time had, with my derwish, a more extensive signification than I had apprehended. "Not so fast, brother," said he, "This place affords other gifts of Providence besides the juice of the grape, which man should not in his presumption contemn ;" and forthwith he went and whispered significantly to our host, who upon the hint stepped out.

Faithful to his rule of making the most of time, our derwish meanwhile fell mumbling his evening orisons, in order that matters of business might all be despatched ere our landlord returned ; but this diligence proved fruitless. The personage came back empty handed, throwing the fault on the vast demands of the last caravan of pilgrims. The holy satyr, therefore, had no further motive for delay, and we proceeded on our way.

I could not help expressing some wonder, as we went

along, at his very open indulgence in profane pleasures, marked as he was by his religious habit: but the observation seemed only to excite his raillery. "How you mistake my drift," answered he, with a pious sigh. "If I mix with sinners, it is but to mend them; and how could this be done if I were to scare them by a premature severity of manners?"

My companion's whole system of ethics seemed of a piece with this small specimen. "It is your half-sinners only," he cried, soon after, "who risk most to find the gates of paradise shut against them. Carry the thing to its proper length, and the danger subsides: you then are sure of salvation."

This doctrine sounding new in my ears, I begged an explanation. "Why," exclaimed he, "is it not acting against one's conscience that alone constitutes what is wrong, and leads to damnation?"—I agreed.

"Then," replied he, "if you only sin on, until habit has silenced that officious monitor, and prevents your thinking any more about its qualms, is it not as clear as daylight, that you revert to a state of perfect innocence?"

All I had to do was to regret that so incontrovertible a truth should be so little understood: only I took care—as my companion might possibly have attained that degree of perfection—to keep him in my eye during the remainder of the journey; nor was I sorry to arrive at the convent, where he introduced me in form to his brethren.

Whatever met my eyes in the monastery seemed, at first sight, to breathe the very essence of holiness. None of the derwishes walked otherwise than with downcast eyes. Their domestics kept time in their work with pious ejaculations; and the very cats of the convent looked as if, like Mohammed's tabby, they were constantly meditating on the perfections of the Koran. A word, whispered by my travelling companion in the ears of the superior speedily produced an entire change of scene, and procured me ocular demonstration of what small boundaries divide saint and sinner. The minor gayeties of the evening ended in a grand burlesque on the pious ecstasies with which the order edified the public.

The sort of gravity which I could not help preserving, among scenes of grossness no longer to my taste, was noticed, and appeared to give umbrage. One of the derwishes, taking me aside: "What ails you, brother?" said he, "I thought we had been sticks of the same

bundle; but I know not what to make of you. As we let ourselves out, you draw in. Have we mistaken our man?"

I felt the danger of encouraging this idea. "By no means," answered I, rousing myself to look sprightly. "My foot just now pains me a little. But for that circumstance you would be astonished at my mirth;" and immediately I poured out a volley of bad jokes to prove my assertion. Still did I most joyfully hail the dawn, which saw me safe out of the tekkieh,* and again on the road. As I paced along, I smiled to think I should have lived to feel myself in danger from being too demure.

CHAPTER XVII.

A LITTLE kafil† of Mussulmans happened to be, like myself, bound for Hems. I joined it, and, in my quality of santón, acted as imam‡ to the party. It was I who settled the whole business of the common worship, took the lead in the prayers of my companions, and chid those who appeared inattentive in their devotions.

The city of Hems tempted me to take a few days' rest. Caravans from the most distant parts of the empire, by making that place their thoroughfare, give it an appearance of uncommon bustle. In the bazaar my santón's habit and practices collected round me such a crowd, that the mootsellim thought fit to inquire into my vocation. Little disposed to answer his questions, I pushed him aside, and darting forward, as if I saw something strange which no one else beheld, prostrated myself two or three times, and began to hold discourse with vacant space. It was evident to all present that I had visions; and the mootsellim began to be looked upon by the mob with an eye of wrath, for wishing to interrupt my converse with the world of spirits. He therefore prudently ceased to interpose his word, lest his voice should be silenced altogether, and slunk away, muttering a few curses on all the saints and santons that infested his district.

* Tekkieh—monastery or building in which the derwishes perform their devout exercises.

† Kafil—small caravan

‡ Imam—priest.

With the mootsellim had come the moollah of the place. This latter looked significantly during the interrogatory, but abstained from speaking. I felt obliged to him for his discretion; and as soon as I was rid of the importunities of the governor, went and sat by the divine. "The fearful," said I to him, in a gracious manner, "build aloof on the inaccessible rock, but the secure mix with their brethren in the valley." My meaning was understood, and the moollah, to show that he felt his place to be among the secure, began to let himself out. "How I envy you!" he exclaimed with a deep sigh.

I pointed to his costly fur, and to my ragged cloak. "No matter!" rejoined he, "sackcloth is a bait for consideration full as much as silks; but by being offered to the mob only has procured you what you sought."

This speech made me wish to raise my character in the moollah's estimation. I gave him a few traits of my history, and he grew disposed in my favour. His mind was stored with much information, and hence it thirsted for more; while few of those he lived with had a single idea to add to his stock. The tenets and views of the Wahabees interested him particularly. I employed the greatest portion of my stay at Hems in giving him a description of these sectaries. In return, he favoured me with a sketch of his own life.

"My father's humble roof," he said, "accidentally afforded shelter from a storm to a magistrate of high degree. On going away, the *cazi-asker*,* in order to save a present, gave his host a counsel. It was to send me to school, and to rely on his patronage. Till then my worthy parent had never boasted but of manufacturing good pipe-heads; he now fancied himself destined to be the author of a head of the law. His fortune was spent in placing me in a *medressé*,† and my health ruined to do credit to the situation. My examination took place the same day with that of a dunce, descended from so long a line of distinguished dunces, that he received his degrees with unbounded applause for having answered right a single question, while I was near losing mine for answering one wrong. I was, however, qualified for promotion: but, to render it the more acceptable, my generous patron kept it back as long as possible; or rather, did nothing

* *Cazi-asker*—chief of the order of Turkish magistrates; of which there are two, one for Roumili and one for Anadoly.

† *Medressé*—Mohammedan endowed college.

for me till his son wanted a tutor. He then proposed the place to my necessities, and soon they saw me the reluctant khodgea* to the young bey-moollah:—for he had been aggregated to the college of muderrees† before he knew his letters. It certainly was unnecessary for him to learn them after. Yet somehow my stupidity was several years in finding out the exceeding bad compliment I paid the father, by requiring diligence of the son. The mistake became evident, when, in recompense for devoting to his service the best years of my life, I was made cadi of a miserable country town. Since that first step my promotion has proceeded at the slowest rate our rules would allow of: and, too old now for new advancement here below I only look for further promotion, where I wish my cazi-asker no worse punishment than himself becoming a preceptor—were it an angel's family."

"Long may the sun still revolve!" said I to the moolah, as he finished his story, "ere you witness the accomplishment of your wish. Long may your wisdom still shine on Hems!"

This city I left to pursue my way northward through a smiling well-watered plain;—thinking as I went along how dissatisfied the wealthy and the great always were with their lot. "Not so," added I, "the poor and the lowly;"—and to confirm myself in my assumption, I stopped to felicitate a passing peasant on the beauty and richness of his country.

"Reserve your congratulations," answered he, surlily, for the Mahwali Arabs; we sow, but they reap. El-Korfan, their emir, lays upon us what contributions he pleases. The monopoly of camels for all the caravans that cross Syria has made him so rich and powerful, that he fears neither governor of Haleb nor pasha of Damascus; and why should he—who can at his pleasure bring into the field his ten thousand well appointed horse!"

It was my special good fortune, soon after, to meet this formidable schiaich himself, encamped in the middle of the road. He too was out of humour as well as the peasant. Numbers of his camels had perished in the desert. But his frowns made not the pilau in his tent look the less inviting. "Let the pasha of Damascus dread his ill temper," thought I; "his ten thousand horse

* Khodgea—teacher, preceptor.

† Muderrees—members of the higher departments of the law.

dare not hurt a hair of a houseless santon's head ;"—and resolutely I walked in, made my salam, and sat down to the seasonable repast. Having refreshed myself, I thanked the prince for his good cheer, and wishing him and his remaining camels good health, marched on to Hamah.

At Haleb, where I stopped next to purchase a new steed, I inquired for the French *philosophe*—the worshipper of *l'utile*. Alas ! even the annuity granted to the director of his health, on his own precious life, had been unavailing. An indigestion had carried him off. I sowed pistachio nuts on his grave !

Descending into the plain which leads to Antakieh,* some Turkmen invited me to their camp. As they were come all the way from Diarbek, their country, to dispose of their cattle in Syrian markets, I thought I could not be far from the mark in saluting them as shepherds. But I mistook the thing completely : they were noblemen. The head of the troop had himself addressed by his followers as aga ; and on introducing me to the lady his wife, who was churning her milk, and to the other ladies his daughters, who were, the one kneading a barley cake, the other working a sheep's wool carpet, and the third darning her own camel's hair trousers, he took an opportunity of informing me in his bad Turkish dialect, of the antiquity of his race, and the pure nobility of his blood :—"A boast which he would not have thought it necessary to make, but that lately so many Christian peasants, fled from the oppression of their pashas, had assumed the name of Turkmen, and brought it into disrepute, by taking their revenge of their tyrannic governors on the innocent traveller." I professed myself highly delighted with the intelligence, and, after eating some cream cheese and drinking some buttermilk, in the most respectful manner bade the exalted circle adieu, and went on. Every step I performed I grew more impatient to cast off my rags—but the time was not yet come.

At Antakieh I made a party with three merchants, a janissary, and some domestics, to go together to Scanderoon ; there to embark for Smyrna, the final limit of my pilgrimage. The man of war was of course to be our defender. I had nothing to do but to pray, in my quality as santon, for his success ; and what could seem

* Antakieh—the ancient Antioch.

less doubtful than that it must be entire in whatever he undertook. It did one's heart good, only to hear from his own lips—ere the journey was well begun—the whole list of feats of bravery he had at various times performed. When, indeed, a little farther on the road, a discussion arose with a few wandering Coords who showed a wish to fleece us, our protector's generous disposition got a little the better of his martial ardour:—"Was it worth while squabbling," he asked, "about a few piastres, especially with wretches whom, if it came to fighting, we could not help annihilating?"—and though, on this occasion, he deplored nothing so much as the valuable time we lost in these debates; yet, when a mile farther on a countryman informed us of a more considerable detachment of the same tribe, stationed in a defile between us and our intended resting place, he was most strenuous for stopping altogether, and lying down where we were—only for the sake of coolness: and to be sure he did show violent symptoms of heat! However, seeing the merchants determined to push on, in spite of his raptures with the place, he came and asked me in a whisper, "Whether I did not think, that in charging the enemy too vigorously his belt, in which he had all his money, might burst?" in which as I agreed, he begged of me, as one protected by my holiness, to take charge of his purse. Unfortunately, in attempting to slip it unseen by the merchants into my hand, the excessive courage which vibrated in his own caused the bag to drop, and with such prodigious clatter as to attract every eye. Mahmood looked ready to faint, and only revived a little on my winking at him to leave the explanation of the affair to me. "The deuse," cried I, "is in these leaden images,* which the Damascus derwishes have given me for their Smyrna brethren;—people will fancy I am made up of gold!" At this speech, the merchants looked very arch, as if to hint that the good santou took care not to trust to Providence alone; while Mahmood brightened up with delight at my lucky hit, nor in the least opposed my putting the money deliberately into my own pocket, before all the witnesses present, as my own undisputed property; not doubting my intention to restore it in due time most conscientiously.

For this, unluckily, I had not leisure. I do not know

* *Leaden images*—of their saints, which some of the orders of derwishes distribute.

what it was that got wrong about my saddle, almost immediately after the transaction, which made me lag behind a little; and when I called to my companions to wait for me, they thought it a clever joke to spur on their horses, and to leave the good santon with his great bag of money alone on the road. I did not think it a very bad joke myself, and—determined to leave those that left me—while they turned to the left I turned to the right. I even had the malice, when a little afterward I caught a distant glimpse of their procession, just as they were entering the obnoxious defile mentioned above, to fire a pistol; at which they set off as if possessed, fancying all the Coords of Coordessan at their heels—and very soon entirely disappeared.

Night coming on apace, I missed my way entirely, and the next morning I found I had considerably overshot Scanderoon, which could now be distinctly descried from the mountains. It would have been madness to turn back. So I went on, refreshed myself at the first little village I reached; and there, having made inquiries respecting the road, resolved to give up all immediate thoughts of Smyrna, and to strike into the courier's track to Constantinople, from which I was not far distant. The capital, after all, must be the place for converting my jewels into gold. That weighty matter once accomplished, I should take up my Alexis at Smyrna in my way to Christendom, where I intended finally to settle, and to commence my new profession of an honest man.

I might have been travelling about five leagues in my new direction, and had just got into the track of the Tartar messengers, when, in fact, a personage of that description passed by me with the customary salute of peace. 'Tis I duly returned. Upon which—the sound of my voice striking the courier as familiar to him—he looked round to survey me. "Heavens!" cried he, presently, "is it the lord Selim I see in this strange attire?" "It is," answered I, "Feiz-ullah;"—for by this time I too had recognized my friend. He was no other than the honest fellow who, at Bagdad, had cautioned me against staying in that city, and whom, for all the thanks I owed him, I now wished at the devil for his quicksightedness. "You see," continued I, "what it is to have a timorous conscience. I felt so oppressed with the weight of my sins—particularly that of having fought among those vile Wahabees—that I begged of all the saints in Paradise to assist me in

wiping out the stain. None heeded my prayer save Hadjee-beckdash,* who one night visited me in my sleep, and bade me take his habit. As you may perceive, it has extracted almost every impurity out of my heart, and I shall soon come forth as spotless as the new-born babe. Meanwhile, tell me what is the news from Bagdad."

"Great," cried Feiz-ullah; "great indeed! I do not ask whether you remember your friend the kehaya. Suleiman had toiled so many years to give this faulty diamond a sort of false lustre, that he felt loath to throw away his labour, and to own his choice a bad one. Determined to leave a monument of his might, he was too old to begin a new creation. All the insinuations against Achmet, therefore, were treated as sheer envy; until a day when there came to hand a something passing hints; a packet from the reis-effendee, enclosing a letter to the Porte in the kehaya's own handwriting. It represented Suleiman as wholly superannuated; and the child of his favour only modestly proposed to set him aside, and to step into his place. On the receipt of this document, a divan was immediately convened of all the individuals hostile to the kehaya, and the business laid before them. Suleiman wished only to dismiss his old favourite; but being with much difficulty rendered sensible of the danger of this lenity, he at last reluctantly signed the kehaya's doom. Scarce was the order issued when Achmet himself appeared. He suspected some plot against his authority, and came to daunt his enemies. Suleiman gave him the wonted reception; while the kehaya, casting a look of rage around the astonished circle, only seemed to count the new victims he intended immolating to his safety. No time was to be lost. Aly-Khasnadar boldly rushes forward, and strikes the first blow: all the rest follow. Dropping down on his knees, Achmet now raises towards the pasha his supplicating hands; but the pasha had thrown his shawl over his face, in order not to see the execution, and in an instant the favourite was despatched. His mangled body, thrown out on the steps of the divan, remained exposed during the whole day to glut the greedy eyes of the populace, and his head," added the Tartar, pointing to a little bundle tied behind him, "I have here. As it has been carefully pickled, I entertain no doubt of carrying it safe to the sultan, according to my instructions."

* Hadjee-beckdash—the patron saint of one of the principal orders of dervishes.

Feiz-ullah here stopping, I gave a deep sigh, not so much in compassion for Achmet, as from regret that all this had not happened while I was at Bagdad. It, however, brought me some real advantage, in addition to the pleasure one finds in the fall of an enemy. Feiz-ullah, as a public messenger, every where found horses ready at his command. It was more than santons did. He proposed to me to go in his company; and for the sake of sharing his privilege, I determined to keep up with his pace.

The Tartar rate of travelling leaves little leisure for a journal. The curiosities even of such cities as Kutayeh I scarcely saw; but I had the best of every thing on the road. Yet was I less unreasonable than my companion, who, after an excellent meal, did not feel ashamed to ask a *douceur* for what he called the wear and tear of his teeth. Once, indeed, his demand was resisted, in a *malkiané** of the sultana Validé, whose waywode swore he would not part with a single aspre of his mistress's slipper-money for all the booted Tartars in the universe. Feiz-ullah had nothing to do but to curse the sovereign's mother for an old toothless jade as she was, without bowels of compassion. Except on this single occasion, the Tartar's whip, which never quitted his hand, was more than a sceptre to him, it was an enchanter's wand; for kings themselves, says the proverb, lose their right where there is nothing; but through means of this little instrument Feiz-ullah always succeeded to produce something: fat fowls, for instance, where the inhabitants pretended not to have a grain of barley; sheep in good case, where there was not a blade of grass; nice fruit, where not a tree or a shrub seemed to grow. Alternately applied with the same spirit to man and beast, its persuasive powers made the most jaded horse go on, and the most reluctant host supply an ample meal.

At Isnik I took leave of my companion and, with all due respect for Hadjee-becktash, of his shabby uniform, my santon's habit. As we travelled along I had gradually collected all the articles of apparel necessary for my transformation. Here, a rich stuff for a turban; there, a handsome vest and cloak; farther on, fine French cloth trousers; elsewhere, papooshes bright as burnished brass. With my parcel under my arm I entered a house of en-

* *Malkiané* (vide vol. i. page 164:)—sief of the nature of an *appanage* or jointure.

tainment, engaged a snug back chamber, shut myself up, slipped off at a single shake all my uncouth rags, with impious hands shaved close my shaggy hair;* nay, without giving them the smallest warning, disturbed all the angels in my beard† itself, and maimed the Lord knows how many tiny sprites, deemed its tenants for life; made a bonfire of my santon's cloak and staff; submitted my person to all sorts of ablution; and thus purified by fire and water—after standing some time gazing in a state of nature on the various articles of new apparel, methodically laid out in a circle around me—proceeded leisurely to put on one by one the items of my new garb.

Stepping out of my cell after this refreshing process, so completely metamorphosed as not to be recognised even by the people in the shop through which I had to pass, I truly felt like the insect which only casts off the unsightly slough of the butterfly to come forth, when older, a gayer, gaudier, nay, younger butterfly. The species of ease and delight derived from my transformation positively baffles all my powers of description. My chest seemed to dilate, my breathing to acquire a freedom before unknown, and my limbs and gait to have gained a fresh vigour and buoyancy. Though now advanced to the wrong side of thirty, and already beginning before to think myself grown old and faded, I might fancy I had dipped afresh in the fountain of youth. Like the revolving year, after passing through the decay of autumn and winter, I had recovered anew all the smiling attributes of spring.

The new companion I had engaged with in the coffee-house was suited to my new character—a young Algerine captain of a man-of-war, come from Constantinople on business, and glad to have me as a fellow-traveller to return with to the capital. We talked all the way. I, like all men already somewhat advanced in life, praising times past; while my companion would only laud in the present tense. “Hold your tongue,” cried he, “about your great Hassan. Our little Husseïn (Kootchook was the new grand-admiral's by-name) is worth a dozen of him. We make more improvements in the navy in a day now, than you used to do in a twelvemonth. Husseïn

* My shaggy hair—Some of the orders of derwishes deviate from the custom of the Turks in wearing their hair very long.

† Disturbed all the angels in my beard—The Mohammedans, from some such prejudice, deem it a sin, after once they have suffered their beards to grow to cut them off again.

sets about every thing at once, has every new invention before it comes out, never loses time in examining, and regularly every year new-models the arsenal from end to end. It almost confuses one to see the builders he has collected from every country,—France, Sweden, and whence not! each speaking a different language, each following a different method, and each pointing out the faults of what all the others do. He would sooner build in the Chinese fashion than copy any one who went before him; and his designs, when executed, will prove the finest in the world! Every dock-yard in the empire—Mytilene, Rhodes, Boodroon, the Dardanelles, Sinope, and Galatsch—is vying with the rest which shall knock up a ship of the line with the greatest speed; and the capital prepares to launch a three-decker so prodigious that none of our seas will have room enough to work her.” I laughed at the eulogium, and wished my friend the command of this wonder, and stepped into the boat which landed me at Constantinople.

My first care was to inquire after the merchant who at Khedieh had so obligingly made me welcome to his travelling equipage for the mere trouble of taking it. At Damascus I had understood him to be gone to the capital; in the capital I found he had commenced the longer journey to heaven. For not only he was departed this world, but in order to ensure a good reception in the next, he had piously bequeathed all his property to an hospital of cats and dogs, to the utter exclusion of his nearer relations, expressly disinherited, and in fact well able, as I heard, to spare his bequests. My finances being by nature somewhat less brilliant than those of the personages in question, I determined, upon this information, fairly to keep what I before thought I had fairly acquired, and on Djiaffer’s own express terms; assured that I did not even do his four-footed legatees—only named by a disposition subsequent to our meeting—an injury of which they could complain. There were donanmas* going forward in the capital; and the Porte, very busy purchasing at all hands diamonds for presents, afforded me an opportunity of selling part of mine to a very great advantage, and still to reserve the stones of the first water for what I deemed the better markets of Vienna and Petersburg. Meantime, informed that some of Djiaffer’s rela-

* Donanmas—fêtes given by the Turkish government on the occasion of public rejoicings, &c.

tions, less fortunate than the remainder, had fallen into want, I took upon myself to correct in their behalf their kinsman's omissions, and by paying them, like a good Moslem, the tithe of my profit, restored them to ease and comfort. After this I felt quite at peace with my conscience for retaining what certainly no other man breathing had any legal claims upon, nor even, in truth, the cats themselves.

On each occasion of my passing through Constantinople since my separation from Spiridion at Chio, something or other had occurred to prevent our meeting; either my own reluctance to intrude upon him, or his impending marriage which made it desirable to himself not to see me, or his absence from the capital. I now made a fresh attempt to embrace my old friend, and called upon the father, but could not see the son. To the indescribable horror of all his friends and relations, he was actually gone on a voyage to the Venetian islands, and to the other parts of Christendom; and that from motives of mere curiosity, and without any views of advantage save instruction! The best chance I had of finding him was at Paris or in London.

Mavrocordato had a friend, a man of weight and respectability, who, throughout all my different vicissitudes, had constantly shown me a more steady and uninterrupted interest than even Mavrocordato himself; and while he never, it must be confessed, had risen quite so high in his admiration of my worth as the latter, never either fell quite so low in his estimation of my qualities as Signor Mavrocordato had since chosen to do. I had particularly noticed Costantino Caridi for one circumstance in his conduct, in which he stood single among his countrymen—namely, that though far from wealthy himself, he used to keep most aloof from me whenever I seemed to have the greatest command of cash; giving as his reason for this singularity, that I never became bearable until I was half-starved. This old friend now met me with a totally new face; for though he knew me to possess the amplest means, he yet paid me a degree of attention which I had never before been able to extort from him even when I was absolutely in want of bread. In fact, he seemed so very determined to obtain complete possession of my mind by every species of address and flattery, that at last I grew distrustful of him whom I never had distrusted before, and conceived that, through

daily society with men of a selfish and intriguing disposition, he had at last totally changed his own character. One day, indeed, I could not help telling him so in direct terms. Sick of his obsequiousness, and quite out of patience with his over-strained compliments on my wit, my figure, and my taste, I ironically begged of him not to waste his breath in flattering one who himself felt so impressed with his utter perfection in every particular, as to consider all attempts at praise as inadequate, and to loathe every compliment paid him to his face, except that addressed to his good sense in sound and well-timed abuse.

At this speech Signor Caridi, instead of looking somewhat confused, as I expected, began to laugh most immoderately; and forcibly taking me by the hand, "Bravo!" he cried; "this is at last as I wished it. I now have hopes, and shall report accordingly. My commission need no longer be deferred."

I asked what he meant.

"You remember," resumed Costandino, "your kinsman of Trieste who so cruelly left you in the lurch at Smyrna?"

"I do," was my reply; "as a very great rogue."

"That is precisely," answered Caridi, "the thing he understood you to be; and the attribute which made him transfer his views from the son of his relative Sotiri to another youth an entire stranger to his blood, but who had been a clerk in his counting-house, and seemed to bear himself as a lad of unexceptionable morals. Unfortunately, poor Elevtheri was not as sound in constitution as in principles; and when your cousin, adopting him as his son, thought it necessary to coax him into being his intended heir, the hapless youth had to undergo such excessive petting, and care, and exclusion from those fresh gales which he used formerly to inhale unrestrained, that the first draught of air he sat in after he had become disaccustomed from its contact, he died of. Delvinioti, now again adrift, wrote to me to make fresh inquiries after his worthy cousin Anastasius, in order that, should age, or disappointment, or other desirable circumstances have produced wholesome fruits in his bosom, new proposals might be made him on the old conditions. The letter which I received to this purpose is dated six months back; and I confess, I had so little hopes of ever seeing you again, that I was going to answer it as relating to a desperate business, when suddenly you reap-

peared. Since that period I have neglected no opportunity of watching your conduct and trying your temper; and you yourself must do me the justice to own, that I have laid every trap in your way which my imagination could suggest. I therefore now begin to think mere time has done enough to warrant my expecting, from motives so powerful as a respectable situation and a rich inheritance, all that still remains to be achieved; and I hesitate no longer to stamp your improvement with the mark of your cousin's splendid offer."

"Or rather," cried I, "to submit my prudence to some fresh and arduous trial, in order to ascertain whether I am weak enough to be taken in a second time by the same wily relation, and can be made to perform another longer journey than the first, only to look at the conclusion like a more egregious fool."

"Right!" exclaimed Caridi, "you are fully warranted to form such a surmise; and therefore, as a security against its being realized, I see nothing for you to do but to take this letter of credit to defray your expenses. It includes, as you see, every place on your way up the Adriatic, and ends with Trieste. Thus, after all, should you and your cousin not suit each other, you will have been franked during a pleasant voyage, and treated with a peep at Christendom, which at any rate, I understand, you meant to visit."

I had, indeed, occasionally thrown out some idea of the kind as a thing which might be of advantage to my child's education; but when directly called upon to decide whether I chose to sit down for life in distant realms, to whose habits and manners I was a perfect stranger, I recoiled from the thought, and for a while kept turning a deaf ear to Caridi's remonstrances. At last, he set in so strong a light the expediency, in my situation, of retiring to Franguestan, both for the purpose of securing my fortune to my son and for that of providing him with the best instruction, that I suffered myself to be persuaded, and resolved, after taking up my Alexis at Smyrna, gradually to work my way out of the precincts of Islamism, and into those where soars the cross. I deposited the letter of credit in my pocket-book, converted my cash into bills, and prepared for my journey. Unfortunately, an illness which awaited me the moment I had leisure to attend to my health, and a stab I received one night in a mistake when convalescent, detained me about eight months longer ere I was able finally to set out.

All things being ready at last for my departure from Stamboul, I ascended the hill crowned by Noor Osmany, and from the loftiest galleries of this superb building took a last parting view of the proud capital which I had made the first scene of my youthful revels, which, during the fairest portion of my life I had considered as my home, and which I was now probably going to quit for ever. For the last time my eye, moistened with tears, wandered over the dimpled hills, glided along the winding waters, and dived into the deep and delicious dells in which branch out its jagged shores. Reverting from these smiling outlets of its sea-beat suburbs to its busy centre, I surveyed in slow succession every chaplet of swelling cupolas, every grove of slender minarets, and every avenue of glittering porticoes, whose pinnacles dart their golden shafts from between the dark cypress-trees into the azure sky. I dwelt on them as on things I never was to behold more; and not until the evening had deepened the veil it cast over the varied scene from orange to purple, and from purple to the sable hue of the night, did I tear myself away from the impressive spot. I then bade the city of Constantine farewell for ever, descended the high-crested hill, stepped into the heaving boat, turned my back upon the shore, and sunk my regrets in the sparkling wave, across which the moon had already flung a trembling bar of silvery light, pointing my way, as it were, to other yet unknown regions.

During the whole of my voyage to Smyrna one only thought kept possession of my soul. It was the rapture which awaited me on landing, in pressing to my bosom my darling child. Four years and a half had now elapsed since his joyless birth—he must be grown full of grace, loveliness, and artless prattle; heir to all the charms of his mother, and ready to return all the endearments of his father: and such became, on stepping on shore, my impatience to behold the fond object of these daily dreams, that it scarcely left me patience to go with composure through the tedious forms and functions from which none are exempt who transfer their persons finally from the watery element to a firmer footing on land.

When, indeed, after traversing the busier parts of the city around the quay, I arrived at that remote and lonely suburb where I expected to find my affections crowned, and which, but for my melancholy search after my lost Euphrosyné, I might never have visited, or at least have

remembered—when I passed by the obscure hovel which I entered while my lovely victim lay in all the agonies of child-birth, praying for a last farewell look from the author of her woes—which I left without seeing her—and where she breathed her last, the clouds of despair seemed for a moment to overcast the sunshine of my hopes, and the son was forgotten in the mother; or rather, I felt that after losing the one as I did, I deserved not to find the other; but this gloom again subsided when I beheld the abode of those in whose care I had left my Alexis.

It was only on their threshold that my delightful vision at last vanished entirely. There I first heard, and from strangers, not only that the merchant intrusted with the small pittance for my child's support had become a bankrupt, and had disappeared, but that even the woman in whose care I had left my darling babe had taken herself off. Nobody could give me the least information respecting herself or her charge; nor—what seemed the strangest part of the story—did distress or failure of the promised supplies appear to have been her motive; for so far from leaving a chance to any succour of reaching her, she had evidently taken pains to baffle all inquiry respecting the place of her concealment. Had Sophia still enjoyed the breath of life, I should—But she was dead. Yet might her evil spirit still haunt the chief scene of her infernal wickedness.

Once, on my homeward journey from the eternal desert—oppressed with heat, and in vain soliciting my cruise for a drop of water to wet my parched lips—I had, when on the point of fainting with exhaustion, beheld in a valley before me the semblance of a limpid lake, ready to slake my raging thirst, and to lave my wearied limbs—had collected my last strength to reach its winding banks—and, when near the delusive spot, had found the vision a mere mockery, and nothing real around me save sands more dry and burning than those I had left behind: but what was this disappointment of the sense—even with life at stake—compared with that which struck my inmost mind at this dreadful moment! for the anguish of the actual shock was still exceeded by the gloom of my forebodings, since it seemed that no other motive could have made the person I sought take pains to evade my inquiry, but having made away with or abandoned my child. Probably it had long ceased to exist; long

probably had my Alexis followed his hapless mother to the grave; and while I was conjuring up in my fertile fancy every brightest image of his beauty and his sprightliness, his lifeless form was already mouldering in its grave: or if he still was permitted to breathe, in common with the meanest of insects, on this vile inhospitable earth, it could only be to experience sufferings worse than death—every pang of illness, of desertion, and of want. The least untoward feat I dared fancy for the relic of my adored Euphrosyné was begging his bread like a wretched orphan from door to door. Even his father might have met him without knowing whom he met—might have bestowed on his own babe the scanty boon of common and churlish charity!

Impressed with this idea, I examined with anxious solicitude every child on which fell my searching eye; stopped to inquire into its parentage and birth-place; and suffered no little creature under five or six years to escape, until it had passed through the regular ordeal of my questions: but no child I beheld resembled my Alexis; none made my heart bound on meeting its first glance. "Ah!" was now my constant cry, "why had I ever lost sight even for an instant of that heart's only remaining treasure; why had I roamed far from his humble abode! Would it not have been better a thousand times to possess my child without bread to eat, than all the riches of the universe without my darling child?"

At last a faint ray of hope broke in, and threw a gleam of light upon my dark despondency. It dimly showed my mind a track to pursue, though it marked not its issue. Indeed, so vague, so faint, so flitting remained the forms it here and there pointed out, that I feared to trust to them as to realities. A Smyrniote lady, who had witnessed my distress, and had even assisted me in my inquiries, sent to inform me of a circumstance which she had heard by accident. The wife of a foreign consul at Alexandria, on a visit the year before with a friend at Smyrna, was said on her return to Egypt to have taken with her, in the capacity of waiting-woman, a person intrusted by a stranger with a child of such singular beauty, that the consulesse, unblessed with a family of her own, rather considered the unprotected babe as a prize than as an encumbrance. Further particulars to identify the child could not be collected at Smyrna, and rather than engage in a tedious and ineffectual correspondence

with Alexandria, I resolved immediately to embark for that place.

Walking impatiently backward and forward on the quay, while the boat was getting ready, I spied a large circle of townspeople gathered round a janissary employed in telling a tale of wonder. It was no other than that of the innumerable Coords killed by the valiant Mahmood, in defending a certain purse which I pocketed on the road to Scanderoon, and still happened to have in my possession. Nor need I add, that Mahmood himself was the relater of his own achievements. At this instance of shameless bragging I could not resist slipping behind the fellow, and whispering in his ear, "Coward, you lie; here is the object of your vauntings, and claim it if you dare!" upon which, throwing the purse down before him, I folded my arms in each other, and waited some little time to see what he would do. It was but to stand still, speechless and pale as a ghost, looking alternately at the money and at me, until, giving up all hopes of his uttering a syllable, I flung the purse to a beggar, and stepped into the boat.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BEHOLD me now for the third and last time on my passage to Egypt; a country which I had not visited, and had thought little of, since the memorable expedition of the capitan-pasha which ended in leaving Ismaïl-bey schach-el-belled at Cairo, and Ibrahim and Mourad in possession of the Saïd. Plague, famine, and the grand admiral had already miserably exhausted the land of the mamlukes previous to Ismaïl's appointment: but the partition with the rebels, to which Hassan consented, completed the difficulties of the new schach-el-belled: it left an enemy constantly hovering over his province, against whom it was necessary to employ extraordinary means of defence, while the income of the chief was diminished in the same proportion as his expenses were increased. Fortunately, Ismaïl's abilities were equal to his task. By his firmness he awed the open hostility of the party in Upper Egypt, and by his vigilance he de-

feated the treachery in his own councils: he made the heavier burthens which he was forced to impose seem lighter by causing them to bear more equally on all classes; he applied himself with equal skill to curing wounds inflicted, and to obviate impending evils; and, finally, he carried from the mountains of Libya to the city of Cairo a line of walls and batteries so judiciously disposed as to be inexpugnable, at least by the undisciplined troops which threatened him from the south.

After these labours, Ismaïl seemed, in 1790, to have nothing further left to do but to sit down and enjoy the fruits of his toil, when that scourge of the East, the plague, imperfectly subdued, broke out afresh with a virulence far exceeding its former fury. From the close-wedged hovels of the poor it soon reached—more ravenous in proportion as it found richer food—to the spacious palaces of the great, and spread dismay and death among the haughty mamlukes, as it had done among the humble natives. At last it penetrated into the abode of the schaich-el-belled himself, and struck his dart at the chief, while in the very act of concerting measures to stem its devastations. In the midst of all his glory, Ismaïl fell a prey to its vengeance—and a few hours saw him dragged from the pinnacle of power to the brink of the grave.

But the disease which conquered his body could boast no conquest over his mighty soul. To the last his mind continued intent upon the welfare of Egypt. Finding his end draw near, he cast his eyes around to seek among his followers some one fit to become his successor, and to support, at his fall, the fabric which he had raised. Summoning all his friends into his presence, he offered the reversion of his dignity successively to Hassan-bey Djeddawee, to Aly-bey Defterdar, and to all his other veterans who seemed in any degree equal to the arduous task.

But all alike declined the tempting offer. Deprived, by the same contagion under whose venom their chief had sunk, of the most faithful of their adherents, these ambitious leaders, who at other times would have disputed, sword in hand, for Ismaïl's rich succession, now wholly unnerved, were compelled, when the honour courted their acceptance, one after the other, reluctantly to avert from it their longing eyes. The supreme rank, therefore, devolved on the very last of those to whom

Ismail had thought of making the offer—on his own creature, Osman-bey Toobbal; a youth as crooked in mind as he was distorted in body, but who alone with alacrity accepted what all the others, with deep regret, refused.

Wishing to give a last instance of his power, or rather to render manifest to all men breathing the last act of his authority, Ismail commanded the proclamation of Toobbal to take place while he himself still had life. From his deathbed he heard his successor announced; and gave up the ghost.

Toobbal had accepted the dignity of schai-ch-el-belled, which he was conscious he could not maintain, only to sell it to the beys in the Saïd. He sent them speedy advice of the death of Ismail, and of the utter debility of his party. On this welcome intelligence they immediately descended along the western bank of the Nile: but, startled by the unlooked-for and new fortifications which they found at Djizé, they retraced their steps backward until they could collect craft enough to cross the river; and, on the reverse of the chain of Arabic mountains, again redescended with such rapidity, that scarce had the beys of Cairo received intelligence of their retreat before Djizé, when they rushed from behind the Mokhadem, and summoned the capital to surrender.

At this appalling intelligence the beys marched out with what force they could muster, headed by the treacherous Toobbal. He seized the first opportunity of passing over to the enemy, whom he led triumphant into the capital, while his own party fled to the Saïd. There its now oldest leader, Djeddawee, was suffered to reinstate himself in his ancient government of Es-souan; where he since has been left undisturbed to reflect on the singularity of his fate, which, though acknowledged the bravest of a fearless race, has yet rendered him chiefly celebrated through his flights. Toobbal, who immediately abdicated his recent honours in favour of the new comers, soon fell into the oblivion he deserved; while Ibrahim recovered, with the rank of schai-ch-el-belled, the government of all the country from Cairo southward, including the harbour of Suez; and Mourad obtained the tract between the capital and the Mediterranean, together with the duties of the ports on that coast—advantages which were duly confirmed by Ezid-Mehemet, the grand signor's pasha, on the candidates paying the customary fees of investiture.

The person who gave me the substance of this account was a middle aged man, speaking Greek like a native, whom I met on my way at Cos. Fresh arrived from the country whither I was bound, he had excited my curiosity more still by his own consequential manner than by the information he had to impart. On some slight offence given him in one of the coffee-houses under the gigantic plane-tree in the market-place,—“Is this a treatment,” he cried, trembling with rage, “for a capitan-pasha!”—at which words I started, and, after considering the personage for some time with increased wonder, “Capitan-pasha! To whom I beseech!” was the question I could not help proposing.

“To Mourad-bey, to be sure,” was the answer. “In order to maintain a lord high admiral,” I ventured to observe, “one should have something of a navy.”

“And who has,” rejoined my informer, “if Mourad has not? It rides at anchor under the very window of the bey’s palace at Djizé, is the best appointed within a hundred miles of the sea, and, when the Nile has attained its full height, sails up as high as Boolak, and down as low as Fostat. At other times indeed it remains properly moored on the left bank of the river, for fear of running aground in its bed.”

“Great, no doubt, were the naval achievements which raised you to the honour of commanding this fleet?”

“As you may suppose.—When Osman-bey Tamboodgee grew tired of the banishment which Hassan procured him to Stamboul, I, Nicola-Hadjee of Tchesmé, was the man who conveyed him to Derneh, whence he easily regained his home. This signal service recommended me to his party, and made Mourad give me the command of his naval force, as soon as he learned my transcendent abilities. Unfortunately I was tenacious of the privileges attached to my high office. I one day battered a kiachef’s windows for protecting a runaway sailor. This spirited act brought me into disgrace, and, like other great people, I now travel for a change of air.”

“It gives me pleasure,” replied I, “to find that the rage for novelties is not confined to Constantinople.” I however consoled with the ex-capitan-pasha on his dismissal, and having filled a bag with the fine bergamots of the island miscalled Stanchio, re-embarked for my destination.

On the coast of Syria the reïs took on board, much
VOL. II.—M

against my advice, two Latin friars—the one an Italian from the convent of Jerusalem, and the other a Spaniard from the hospice at Ramleh.

If they had been Greeks they could not have quarrelled more unceasingly. Under the delusion that no one understood their idiom, they were constantly refreshing each other's memory with all the little peccadilloes of their respective establishments. "The convent at Jerusalem had suffered the schismatics to invade all the sanctuaries; the hospice at Ramleh had bribed the Arabs to plunder the pilgrims; the monks of the former place had set their blood on fire with drams; those of the latter with pimento and quarrels."

That—whatever might be the cause—the humours of both these representatives of their respective communities were in a state of high fermentation, no one could deny. More than once I expected an explosion, which would end fatally for both. Luckily, breath only—not blood—was wasted; and we had the satisfaction to land both Fra. Diego and Fra. Giacomo, sound in body, though very sore in mind, on the quay of Alexandria.

My feet had not yet pressed the long-looked-for shore, when I began to inquire for the consular mansion in which centred all my hopes. With trembling steps and throbbing heart I hied me to its threshold. A vague report, an idle story, might have deceived me: I might have gone away from the child I came to seek; and when near the door, I was on the point of turning back, in order yet a while to defer the inquiry, and to gather more fortitude for an answer, which must bring with it inexpressible happiness or bitter disappointment.

Apprehensive lest the sight of a stranger in the Turkish garb might alarm the family, I first gave a gentle knock. No one answered:—I then repeated the summons. A domestic at last appeared. "Both his master and mistress were out," he said, "and it was uncertain when they would return."

"Had they a child with them?" I asked.

"There was a child in the house."

"Found at Smyrna, and belonging to a stranger?"

"Oh no! brought up in the family by its own mother."

This seemed to dash all my hopes to the ground! However, "Might I see the little boy?" I asked.

He too had been taken out to walk.

"Where?"

"It was impossible to tell."

Perplexed, I now left word I would call again, and withdrew from the door in deep despondency. Yet when I reflected that the servants might be strangers to the concerns of their masters, and these latter not desirous to own their little favourite a foundling, I did not entirely despair. I paced up and down the road in sight of the mansion, to watch the coming home of the infant.

Nor was I long without deserying at a distance a child approaching, whose dress belonged not to the country. A female held it by the hand; but from *her* my very first glance recoiled as from a total stranger—one who bore not the least resemblance to the nurse of my Alexis.

"It cannot be he!" sighed I to myself; and yet so playfully did the little fellow trip along, so erect was his gait, and so noble his mien; with so lively and inquisitive a manner did he stop to survey each new object on his way, that I envied his too happy parents, and could immediately have given up all paternal claims elsewhere for a good title in the treasure before me. "Ah!" thought I, "had this angel been my own!" But as he drew nearer—as by degrees I discerned more of his countenance and his features—as I became enabled more distinctly to trace the outline of his serene and radiant front, of his dimpled downy cheek and of his wavy coral lip—as, above all, he himself, with a look at once arch and innocent, fixed upon me his full bright eye—that eye which so eloquently spoke the heaven of his heart—O God! O God! all Euphrosyné at once burst upon my sense; entire conviction in an instant filled my mind. I felt it must be, it *was* my own Alexis, my own babe I beheld!

Unable to repress my emotion, I darted forward, and was going to clasp my child to my bosom, when the woman, who already from a distance had noticed my eager look, and had made a circuit to avoid me, frightened at my frantic manner, snatched up the infant, and ran screaming to the house.

Fearful of increasing her alarm, I purposely slackened my pace, and gave her time to gain admittance ere I followed her lovely charge to the door: but when I did, I found it immoveably closed against me. No entreaty, however earnest, could obtain its being reopened. "Strangers," was the plea, "never were admitted when the consul was abroad." I was not even allowed, hard

as I begged for it, another view of my Alexis from without. "What business could I have with the child? An evil eye, or an evil intent must with reason be apprehended;" and lest I should by my urgency confirm the growing distrust, I at last retired. But I had beheld my boy; and the tumult in my breast, though extreme, was a tumult of bliss!

As soon as, by my calculation, the consular pair must be come home, I called again. After a little parleying within, of which I could not guess the drift, I was told I might see the lady.

This promised well.—"For the wife to encounter my visit," thought I, "she must know my business, and have made up her mind to acquiesce in my right." I was ushered into a back chamber, where, however, so many attendants crowded in after me, that it looked as if they either intended or expected some violence.

Presently walked in a stately matron, who, disdaining to be seated, and of course keeping me standing, asked with a sort of lofty civility, in what she could oblige me; but when informed of the purport of my visit, affected the utmost amazement at my demand. "She was wholly ignorant of the circumstances alluded to—had no stranger's child under her roof. The little boy I met was the son of her own servant: the mother, marrying again, had left him in her care; and she had no knowledge of any other child. As to the Smyrna transaction upon which I founded my claim, it must be the invention of some idle person, or the report of some enemy." In a word, my Alexis was refused me, and all my entreaties could not even obtain me the permission to give him a single embrace. It was feared I might cast some spell upon the child. "In fact," it was observed, "I might have done so already;" and presently the lady, affecting apprehensions for herself, hastily withdrew, while her servants peremptorily urged me not to protract my intrusion.

I myself at the moment saw no advantage in staying; for whether the consulesse believed her own story or not, it was plain that she had framed it with deliberation, and meant to support it with boldness. Any remonstrance on my part could therefore only redouble her caution, and perhaps give me the appearance of temerity; nay, be construed into an act of violence. It was wiser that I should appear to submit, until I had acquired a little more local information of the personages and circumstances,

and had armed myself with such proof not only of my right to a child I had lost, but of its identity with the child I had found, as could not be resisted either with justice, with reason, or with safety. Meantime I retired for the present: but full of dismay, doubt, and disappointment.

The first stone that lay by the wayside I made my seat, and there began to ruminate upon what had passed. "After all," said I to myself, "may not my excessive wish to find my child have deceived me? May I not have cause to distrust my own imagination rather than the veracity of others? So vague were the reports on which I came to Alexandria, so perfectly did my fears always balance my hopes, so little could I at any time have been justified in laying the least stress on my expectations, that with an indifferent person addressed as I had been the account of the consules would have found implicit credence; and only because I was not sufficiently unconcerned in the business impartially to weigh the evidence on both sides—because I could only bear to dwell upon such circumstances as seemed to favour my own hopes—because the child I had met offered to the image impressed upon my mind a resemblance which I had been every where sighing to find, did I persevere thus to consider myself certain of what others would have long begun to doubt—or rather would have ceased to believe."

Yet, was that resemblance itself on which I thus boldly built my conviction so great as it appeared to my eagerness? Beauty alone surely could not make it so. However heavenly a child of Euphrosyné ought to be, it still was not the only child on this globe entitled to bear the countenance of a cherub! and as to any other more definite conditions of similitude, they could hardly yet be said to exist in a very striking degree in the still vague and uncertain lineaments of childhood, particularly where their very symmetry was such as to prevent any decisive peculiarity: but supposing even the likeness to have been as great as it was possible to conceive, how often is such resemblance found to be the mere effect of chance!

"Should, then," continued I, "this single circumstance be allowed to outweigh the solemn assertions of people holding a respectable rank in society, and a conspicuous situation in the place: of people not seemingly interested to support a disgraceful tale of fraud, and though taken wholly by surprise, yet agreeing perfectly in their ac-

count with that which their servants had given before them? Especially when the female I found about the child, instead of being the nurse I left with my babe, and whom an idle report had placed about the consules as her maid, was a totally different person."

Here my reason, having urged all it could think of to check my imagination, ceased its remonstrances: but, spite of its arguments, my feelings would not be convinced. When with the report spread at Smyrna, and with the consules's own acknowledgment that a woman no longer in the family was mother to the child, I combined an indescribable something in the look and manner of all concerned, which bespoke them to be acting parts rehearsed before; and above all—when I reflected upon those internal yearnings first and only felt, among all the children I had seen, in favour of this angel now so near me, and which I could only consider as the cry of blood, I still persisted in my former belief, and resolved to set on foot, as soon as I had got a covering over my head, the most minute and circumstantial perquisitions.

They were chiefly carried on among the neighbours and tradesmen, who from their situation and concerns must be best acquainted with the consul's family and domestics—and this was the result:—

Neither the child nor its pretended mother had been known in Egypt previous to the lady's return from Smyrna. The person who called herself, but had never obtained belief for being, the mother, had very soon after her arrival again quitted the consular mansion, to marry and to follow to his native island a Taooshan; and the little boy, left behind, had yet continued to experience in the consular family such truly parental tenderness, as to render evil tongues busy with the name of the consul, and even with the fair fame of the consules herself.

Mine was a totally different conclusion. When in addition to the circumstances here mentioned, I moreover found the description of the pretended mother tally in every respect most accurately with the features and figure of the woman to whom I had intrusted my Alexis, I became confirmed in my original belief, and no longer retained the smallest doubt of two things,—firstly, that the child was my own; and secondly, that the consul and his wife fully intended that I never should recover it. Determined in some way to obtain a treasure which nature had denied them, they had stooped to steal the offspring

of another; and having already set at defiance both the tongues of slander and the voice of truth, it could not be doubted but that they were fully resolved to go any lengths in support of their imposition and their theft.

Nor did theirs appear a scheme of danger or of difficulty. The testimony of a respectable family, fixed at Alexandria in a public situation, must intrinsically offer so much more weight than the bare assertion of a stranger—of a roving individual—on whom the very mode of his appearance cast the air of an adventurer, that so far from the consul having to fear any blame for not admitting my unsupported claim, the only conduct for which he must unavoidably incur censure would be giving easy credence to my statement, and committing to my suspicious care, upon my bare word, the fate of a lovely unprotected babe. Until I could back my pretensions by the most irrefragable proofs, the consul must be justified to every indifferent beholder in treating my claims, my complaints, and my threats as those of an impostor only come with extortionary views.

Yet how was I to obtain those proofs, the want of which must leave me patiently resigned to my wrongs, and quiet spectator of my Alexis remaining the undisputed property of strangers? My right to my own progeny had always appeared to me so notorious and so incontestible; I so fully expected to find its depositaries only sighing for a release from their trust, and alarmed at my protracted silence; I had so little idea that there existed on the face of the globe a being disposed to rear at his expense a stranger's child; and I so much less conceived the possibility of there being an individual anxious to claim my poor foundling as his own legitimate offspring, that not only I had never thought of bringing the legal vouchers for my paternity to Egypt, but had not even had its proofs duly established in the place where it commenced. How difficult, therefore, must it be, after so much time elapsed, to obtain on that subject any sufficient evidence! Euphrosyné, when she became a mother, was a deserted female; she died a lonely outcast; and Alexis, left from the moment he saw the light of day in the obscurity of entire abandonment, had passed the first period of his wretched existence unclaimed by a father, unowned by a relation, and in such entire concealment from all who could feel the least interest in substantiating his parentage, that I myself, the first time I beheld him, had to recur

to testimonials on which no one else durst have relied, ere I pressed him to my bosom as my own flesh and blood. Even after that meeting, I had never come forward in the world as his parent; on the contrary, without seeming on any occasion to afford him the care, or to show him the love, becoming that sacred character, I had only one instant—and as it were by stealth—beheld my babe, from that moment again to leave it wholly uninquired after, and to roam to the regions most distant from its abode. Two individuals, indeed, possessed my secret, were apprized of my sentiments; the nurse intrusted with the person of my child, and the merchant depository of the poor pittance left for its education. But the man was become a bankrupt, the woman had betrayed her trust; the one could nowhere be found to give evidence in my behalf, and the other was no doubt amply paid to support the untrue tale of my adversaries.

All these circumstances, however, only rendered my task more difficult, without in the least altering the line of conduct I was bound to pursue. Ere I dared to make my unavailing remonstrances grow into more peremptory measures, I must try to collect what judicial proofs, however scanty, Providence had still left within my reach.

In order to proceed on this arduous business with all the advantages of local knowledge and all the diligence of a direct interest, I first thought of going back to Smyrna myself, and to bribe the nurse in the cause of truth more richly than she had been in that of falsehood; but considerations which I durst not disregard prevented me from pursuing this plan. Common report represented the consul and his family as intending early in spring to return to Europe. In that case, my child would again be removed, and that to realms wholly beyond my confined sphere of action; and whether the journey really was in agitation or not, to absent myself from Alexandria, or even in that place to lose sight a single instant of my boy, seemed to me highly dangerous, lest, availing themselves of the opportunity, his unjust detainers should drag him to some spot where they might baffle all my attempts to discover his abode, or at least deride all my efforts to enforce my right.

I therefore determined not to stir from where I was, and to employ the best and most intelligent of the friends I still possessed at Smyrna to act for me in that city and

in the Archipelago. Informing him of all the particulars of my case, I begged he would collect all the testimonials attainable in my favour. The letter was sent by a messenger who promised to use the greatest possible speed; and until I should receive the answer, I prayed to God to grant me patience.

The paltry lodging where meanwhile I fixed my residence obliquely faced the consular mansion. No important occurrence within its walls productive of external symptoms could well escape my observation; and while I hired three or four lynx-eyed emissaries to prowl about and to report on every event at the outposts, I myself remained immoveably stationed under my roof, where I commanded all the accessible parts of the corps-de-logis. Determined not to stir from my observatory while my Alexis remained in the opposite house, I continued day after day in the same unalterable posture, concealed behind the lattice-work of my window, waiting an answer to my letter, and watching the abode of my child.

Sometimes, indeed, the tediousness of my situation was relieved by the inexpressible pleasure of seeing my Alexis himself, when taken out to enjoy his little exercise before the door; and beyond all conception was the rapture with which my eager eye pursued my darling infant in the various little gambols and frolics suggested by his delight at his short and rare emancipation from an irksome confinement; for even to him an excursion of the sort was now become a rare occurrence. It seems that the dread of my secret designs constantly haunted my adversaries, and never after my visit, as before, did they suffer my child to be taken to any distance, or even out of sight of the threshold, on which, moreover, besides the woman who attended him, always stood waiting three or four male domestics, with eyes riveted on the boy during the whole of the time he remained out.

All this, however, proved how highly he was prized, with what tenderness he was treated, and how much his infantine happiness must be consulted by those who detained him from his father; and amid all my impatience, I still blessed God, and sometimes almost my opponents themselves—miserable as they made me—for their love of my child.

For fear of unnecessarily exciting a premature alarm, which must still increase the distrust of the consular family and diminish the liberty of my boy, I took care

never to show myself out of doors in the daytime; and only at night, and when all else in Alexandria went to repose, ventured out to seek the little air and exercise which my health indispensably required.

The detached cluster of habitations of which mine was the humblest stood nearly midway between the busy haunts of the modern town and the deserted site of the ancient city; and it was among the gloomy ruins of the latter that I by preference went at dusk to take my lonely walk. The few straggling pillars—some nodding on their bases, and others deprived of their capitals—which, though dismal trunks at best, still stood erect among the prostrate remains around, as the lonely and deserted memorials of the splendid and busy scene of which they once formed a part, presented to my imagination a fate so like my own, that I often thought I read in the looks of these impassible monuments the sympathy withheld from me by man.

One evening, after a few hasty turns round that wide deserted area which once contained the finest library, the most celebrated school, and the busiest population of antiquity, I sat down to rest myself in the most dreary part of the dreary solitude, on the margin of a yawning catacomb, whose sloping gallery seemed to penetrate unto the inmost bowels of the earth. Suddenly, in the midst of my melancholy musings, sprang up from the dark recesses of the subterraneous vault, almost underneath my feet, a phantom of preternatural appearance, which, after taking two or three strides, stopped to look round; but no sooner caught the first glimpse of my person than it again darted forward, and disappeared among the mouldering masses. Except two large glaring eyes, I had been able to distinguish no one feature intervening between the monstrous turban and enormous beard which encircled the face of his strange figure. Its height seemed to exceed the ordinary stature of man. Wrapped up in an ample robe which trailed on the ground, it glided along rather than walked; and I thought, that if it belonged to the world above ground, and not to that of the ghouls from which it came last, it could scarcely be regarded as any thing but a lineal descendant of Pharaoh's own body sorcerers.

To whatever class of beings the apparition might belong, this seemed equally certain, that it felt little wish to be better known; but it was that very circumstance precisely

which made me resolve to pursue it, and find out its real nature; heedless of dangers which caution might not be able to see, or courage to overcome. The motion of my shadow cast forward by the moon officiously announcing my intention, the mysterious personage, who seemed to have stopped behind some wall or pier to reconnoitre his observer, again rushed forward from his ambush, and went on. It is true, he lengthened his steps in such a way only as to avoid the appearance of positively running away from my pursuit; but his knowledge of the intricacies and windings of the place, nevertheless, gave him so great an advantage, that in spite of my superior agility, I hardly gained ground upon him, except when I was expressly allowed to overshoot the mark by his sliding behind some friendly wall or hillock, whence he no sooner saw me on a wrong scent, than away he again dived in an opposite direction.

Thus did the chase last full half an hour, when to my utter astonishment I found myself again brought back, by an immense circuit, to the mouth of the very cave from whose dark entrails the phantom first had darted forth, and into whose unfathomable abyss it would now again irrecoverably have plunged, but for the circumstance most pointedly intended to avoid detection,—I mean the ample flow of its garment, which just at the entrance of the vault caught a projecting stone, and in defiance of all the pulling and tearing of its wearer, would not be disentangled, and brought the fugitive to a dead stop.

I now grasped him tight round the waist, forced up his head which he was trying to hold down, and by the light of the moon beheld—with wonder beheld, spite of his enormous turban—the Italian improvisatore, who at Smyrna, after promising me promotion in the empire of reason, had cruelly left me to languish in that of despotism. “Heavens!” cried I, “Cirico, is it you?”

“It is,” answered the detected poet, after he had stood a while considering whether he should say yes or no; “and would you had been in Erebus ere you had found me out!”

“And what business, may I ask, can a man accustomed to preach jacobinism along the highways have to dress like a bearded Magus, and take up his abode under ground in the catacombs of Egypt?”

“Do you promise secrecy?” said Cirico, looking at me earnestly.

"While I live," cried I, "provided for once you choose to abstain from fiction."

"Then listen!" replied the son of Apollo; "and be content with plain prose." Upon which, offering me a seat beside him on the prostrate obelisk to which we now had advanced, he began as follows:

"You remember my sudden disappearance from Smyrna. Prompted, however, to my departure rather by an abstract wish to leave that city than by a distinct preference for any other particular place, I had myself rowed to the first vessel in the harbour ready to set sail; and when under way, asked whither I was going. To Alexandria, was the answer, and it pleased me. I remembered hearing a certain ambassador at Constantinople talk of his consul in Egypt as a man entirely absorbed, not in trade or politics, but in magnetism; and it was on the never sufficiently to be praised virtues of that mysterious fluid that I built my little scheme. The chain of evidence as to my identity, between the seaports of the Levant more to the westward and Alexandria, was easily broken by my landing at Damiat, assuming the garb of the country, and only appearing at Alexandria some months after my departure from Smyrna so completely smoke-dried, and with such a beard, and such a benish, that but for pulling off my turban as you did, you yourself would never have found me out. I therefore burst upon this new world like one of those torrents which, from an unknown source in the snowy Alps, plunge down all at once into the vale below. It must, however, be confessed, that when first introduced to the consul, on whom I intended to operate, in the character of an Italian nobleman on his way to the Pyramids, the colossal figure of my entertainer, his shaksheer hanging about his heels, his turban awry on his head, and still more than all that, his face resembling that of an old leopard, with a pair of whiskers diverging from under his broad flat nose like the bristles of a clothes-brush, so completely disconcerted me as at first to put my whole story out of my head; nor was the little tale I had prepared of much use when recalled to my remembrance, as I found by the consul's account that he himself was filled with so vast a supply of the magnetic virtue, as only to want a person as void of intellect as full of faith for the purpose of being made the passive recipient of his all-powerful influence. Nothing, therefore, was required of me in this affair but to

seem a chef-d'œuvre of natural dulness—a vacuum that should contain no single thought of its own to clash with the brilliant corruscations of which I was to become the vehicle.”

“And could an improvisatore of the first water,” cried I, interrupting Cirico, “submit thus to conceal his talents, to hide his light under a bushel, to stem the tide of his poetic *estro*, by which I have been more than once nearly overwhelmed?”

“Friend!” resumed Cirico, “no difficulties could for an instant arrest a genius like mine. A plan immediately presented itself to my mind which might combine in any proportion I wished the imbecility demanded of me by my magnetiser, and the uninterrupted worship I had vowed the Muses. The consul’s offers were accepted; I left the Pyramids to their fate, and staid to be magnetised.

“But when thrown into the customary coma, in what shape do you think that the emanations of the consul’s intellect, with which his dumpy claws had been cramming me until the perspiration trickled like dewdrops down his whiskers, flowed from my lips? Can a bell, whatever substance may strike it, give any sound but that of metal? Can a harp, touched by whom it may, be mistaken for a drum? Then let who might magnetise Giacinto Cirico, I still could only spout Italian operas. Availing myself of the leisure which my apparent idiocy gave me to spend the whole day in compositions intended some time or other to eclipse those of Metastasio himself, I recited these high-wrought productions of my own muse on the magnetic evenings as the spontaneous explosions of the consul’s prompting genius; and though this gentleman felt a little startled at first at the strange form his emanations assumed, and wondered he should have inspired me with the *scenas* of a pastoral or a ballet, he soon discovered in my recitativos and arias a mystic sense, as I soon derived from them a solid support; for I affected to feel much exhausted by the operation, and took special care that the sittings should not be gratuitous.

“Even this, however, could hardly make me amends for the mortification I constantly experienced, since the consul felt so fearful lest the world might not give his magnetic virtue the credit of my effusions, that to my own face he used to tell every new comer what an idiot I was; until, to avoid this daily disgust as well as the

danger of being detected while at my work, I took the habit of retiring during the greater part of the day to these ruins, where I write undisturbed, and whence I only issue forth in the evening at the magnetic hour. I was just going to my task, when, by squatting yourself down over the mouth of my cavern, you kept me entrapped, until, fearing to be late, I made a bold push, which ended in my discovery. But I believe you too honourable to betray the exceeding confidence you see I repose in you."

The poet here stopped, and I ruminated. After a few moments of silence, "Cirico," said I, "tell me one thing. I have a *pet* consul as well as yourself. I know they frequently visit. Is Signor R—— also bitten?"

"He is," replied the improvisatore.

"Eureka!" cried I—and once again felt hope and joy revive: then told Cirico my story, and having concluded it, "Now," added I, "you must do me a favour. In your *comas* you must impress my consul—whether in song or in recitativo, no matter!—with the heinousness of keeping other people's children, and the inconvenience which may arise from such proceedings; and if by so doing you get mine restored to me, depend upon my eternal gratitude and services." Cirico promised to compose an interlude on purpose; and departed to join his expectant circle—so did I to return to my lonely lodging.

And more lonely, more sad still was it fated to become: for presently even the transient gleams of happiness reflected upon its walls from the opposite mansion—the occasional glimpses I had of my child, were destined to cease; and this through my own fault too!

It was the day after the interview with the poet. As usual my eyes were riveted on the door of the consular mansion; as usual it began to vibrate, slowly to turn upon its hinges, and, cautiously half opened, to let out as if by stealth my Alexis and his nurse, to take a little air within its immediate reach: but while the woman settles some part of her garment, the little fellow—moved by a sudden impulse—slily slips his hand through her negligent fingers, and feeling himself at liberty, darts forward like an arrow, and in play runs and hides behind my projecting wall. From my own window my eye, plunging right upon him, beheld his sweet face peeping out now and then to enjoy his nurse's search; and down I rushed to embrace my heart's darling—but already it was too late!

Already had Alexis, unwilling to distress his favourite, run back to her arms; and when I came out, he seemed, by the warmth of his caresses, to be craving her pardon.

Could a father witness such endearments, and abstain from claiming his share? Great as was the imprudence of the act, I ran after my child, and in its nurse's own resisting arms imprinted on its lovely face a thousand hurried kisses.

From the moment my person had appeared in sight, the woman had set up such a yell of frantic imprecations as soon brought out into the road all the other too remiss attendants. Immediately they strove to tear the child away from me—and fearful lest it should suffer in the struggle, I relinquished my hold; but going home, I kissed as I went along each print of its dear little feet.

From that hour I no longer beheld my darling boy! One, two, three whole subsequent days—spent by me in the most anxious expectation and watching—were slowly brought to their conclusion without my being able to perceive the least glimpse even of those to whose care my child seemed especially committed: and while in the daytime I was thus disappointed of my former solace, I could at night obtain sight of Cirico. As if actuated by some new impulse, he had ceased frequenting his former haunts; he answered not even my notes of inquiry into the progress of the business intrusted to him; and at last it struck me that the traitor, aware how much I had to say to his disadvantage, so far from labouring in my cause, might rather be trying to avoid me altogether, and secure himself a firmer support by services elsewhere to my disadvantage. From his unaccountable silence as well as disappearance, I concluded that not only he had imparted to my adversaries all my designs, but had assisted them in eluding my vigilance and conveying my Alexis away. At this idea, which every thing I perceived only tended to confirm, I no longer felt able to set bounds to my paternal anguish; ran out on the road, into the street, and on the quay; and wherever I went, denounced the detainers of my child, loaded them with imprecations, and tried to stir up the populace to demolish their abode. Of this sally too I had to pay the penalty.

Mourad, against whom I had joined the insurgents—Mourad, whom I since had fought with Hassan,—Mourad, whose blood my hand had drawn, and whose

face it had disfigured, now ruled the northern district of Egypt, and, consequently, was master of Alexandria. How ill I must stand in this bey's favour could not fail to be found out by those interested in baffling my exertions, and marring my project. They represented me as a spy of the Porte upon the rulers of Egypt, and gave to the real object of my journey the colour of a mere pretence. Accordingly, a few days only after I had seen my Alexis for the last time, I received a formal injunction from the governor of the place, in the name of the authorities of Cairo, to quit the land of Egypt within twenty-four hours, under pain of instant forfeiture of life.

At this blow I almost lost my senses. "They triumph, then!" I cried, "my inhuman oppressors. They part me for ever from the only object capable of throwing a charm over my remaining days! Then why seek to preserve an odious existence; why not take away my child by force, or perish in the attempt!" And hereupon I determined, unless my Alexis was restored to me immediately, to deal death around, and to end with myself; and, drawing out my handjar, sallied forth into the street to execute my purpose.

Just on turning the corner I met a messenger from Cirico in search of my lodging. He slipped into my hands a pencil note, only containing these short words, "To the Catacombs without delay!"

Without delay I went. I had always, it is true, believed Cirico to be a rogue; but not an ill-natured rogue. Though he would most gladly have seen all the crowned heads of Europe stuck like pumpkins upon poles, I was convinced that he would rather of the two help to keep that of a private friend upon its own shoulders. Already had he been waiting some time when I reached the place appointed.

"Hush!" cried he, in a solemn tone, seeing me move my lips to speak; "waste not uselessly your breath; it may be wanted hereafter. Magnetism—that mystery which reveals all other mysteries—has informed me of all that you are burning to relate. I might have predicted it; but why announce evils which we cannot prevent?"

"Is this all you have to say?" exclaimed I, disappointed.

"Not at all," answered Cirico. "The consul has by

my magnetic speeches been made to feel compunction for his unjust proceedings; he is certain now your brat will bring him ill luck."

"Then why does he not restore the angel to its parent?"

"Because he is prevented by superior fears."

"Of what?"

"Of the thing to him most awful—of his wife; whose attraction I always found to be of the negative sort. After my magnetic sleep, I took R—— into a corner, and spoke to him awake. He then ventured to acknowledge his dread of his rib; and owned he would give the world to see justice done you, provided he had no hand in the doing. In short, you have his leave to recover your child in whatever way you please—by stratagem or by force."

"Little thanks to any man for that privilege," cried I: "such a sort of leave I might have taken without asking it."

"R—— means," rejoined the poet, "that if you should devise a clever method of smuggling the urchin out of his mansion, or even of storming the house—if nothing else will do, he will not stand in the breach to repel you, nor yet run very hard to overtake one so desperate, should you seize upon and carry off the prize."

"But if I fail, I must take all the consequences."

"Just so. He will then enforce in all its rigour the decree of the beys, in order to clear himself to his loving wife from all suspicion of connivance."

I paused a while; at last, "Cirico," cried I, "fires are frequent evils in these realms. Tell the consul—the instant he smells the least smoke—not to fail turning his whole gynecæum into the street." And thus having given a hint of my scheme, we discussed the best mode of execution, having settled which, not without a good deal of argumentation, we parted for the present; but soon to meet again in a different spot.

CHAPTER XIX.

BEGINNING with the object in which my plan was to end, I first went to the harbour to see what vessels were ready for sailing. Besides a felucca, brimful of fresh-made hadjees, going to be dropped at the different Barbary ports, I only found a small polacre laden with grain for Ancona, already in the roads, and only waiting the evening land-breeze to set sail. I agreed with the captain for my passage, on receiving security for our weighing anchor the moment I came on board.

My business thus settled on one element, I began to consider how to manage the other on which my scheme depended: but I own I saw much greater difficulty in making a useful ally of fire than of water; and it puzzled me not a little how to raise a flame round the consular mansion and not to pass for an incendiary. The gynecæum, besides, which I was most anxious to smoke, lay at the back of the house, and stood screened from external approach by a high and impervious wall. To kindle combustibles under its well-screened windows in such a way as to occasion a great fright and very little real mischief might have baffled the skill of an abler engineer. My expedient was, to suspend bundles of wool, straw, and other stuff, by means of wires, from long slender poles.

The hour being arrived which was wont to witness the first consular slumbers, our hostile operations commenced. Part of my myrmidons hid themselves with their fire apparatus behind some rubbish near the quarter which I meant to alarm, and there waited my signal, while the remainder, with myself, lay perdu behind a low shed near the entrance door. The shrill whistle which was to set all in motion soon was sounded, and presently we saw slowly rise from behind the beleaguered building a thick column of smoke, which not only overcanopied the spreading roof, but circulated in a wavy stream round the various apartments. Loud cries of "Fire" hailed its appearance from without: the alarm was given to the inhabitants by repeated knocking at all the apertures; and in a few minutes it was evident that every soul within was on foot

Yet did not a creature venture out. The door on which my eyes were riveted remained as immoveably fast as before, and while the neighbours began to flock from all quarters to the spot, the inert inmates of the house seemed to make no attempt to escape.

My mind now again misgave me, and suspicions of every sort rushed into my imagination. Perhaps after all Cirico had played me false; perhaps the consul had found his courage or his cowardice fail him; perhaps my enemies were actually watching to surprise me in the commission of a seemingly heinous crime. Meanwhile minute after minute was elapsing: the night-watch of the Franks would soon go its rounds; nay, my combustibles, almost burnt out, threatened to put a speedy end to the siege, even independent of a sally or a rescue; when no other fate could befall Alexis's miserable father but being driven out of Egypt, and forced to bid his child—his darling child—farewell for ever.

In this situation, I had already begun to consider whether it might not be better to take myself off at once, than to await the issue of my desperate scheme, when at last the house door—suddenly bursting open with a tremendous crash—poured forth in one single rapid stream into the street a far longer string of females than I had fancied the whole mansion could contain.

The consulless herself led the van, enveloped in a loose wrapper. Immediately after came my Alexis, still half asleep in the arms of his nurse. A set of pale and ghastly attendants, screaming to attract notice, brought up the rear.

No time was to be lost:—while my trusty attendants darted across the way to break the line of the procession, and to insulate the nurse, I sprung forward to snatch away the child; but already had my figure caught the eye of his ever-watchful guardian. She gave her usual warning scream, and instinctively all the other women echoed the yell. The concert brought around us all the bystanders who had gradually collected, and who, seeing a tall fellow lay hold of an infant and carry it off, stopped not to ask by what right I did it, but immediately set up after me a general cry and pursuit.

For rendering it ineffectual I relied on my agility, assisted by the deep shadows of the night: but the pursuing troop was too near, and at every step I advanced its numbers were increased by all those who, running to the

fire, met us on the way, and turned back to join the chase. The only thing I could do was to draw my yatagan, and while I tried with one arm to shield my child from the incessant shower of stones, with the other to brandish my weapon, and to beat off the pelting mob. Sometimes, in order to prevent being closed in upon, I was obliged to face about and to make a few passes, calculated to teach those who came too near their proper distance: but in so doing a sharp pebble hit my lovely infant's face, and made the blood gush in streams from his cheek. At this sight I grew desperate: my strength seemed to increase tenfold; and at every stroke of my sabre some misereant was maimed or bit the ground.

What power could resist a father fighting for his child? Terror gradually seized all the nearest rabble: the rest slackened their pace; and a certain interval arose between the pursuers and their intended prey. I was about a dozen yards ahead of the foremost, when the lantern agreed upon as the signal of the boat began to glimmer on the shore. I now mustered all my remaining strength, and, with only such few windings as were necessary to throw the bloodhounds off the scent, made for the beacon. Many, tired of the chase, had already given in; and a small portion only of the pack still kept yelping at a distance.

I therefore thought myself safe—when all at once between me and the goal flashed like forked lightning two sabres, whose wearers, guessing my intention, had by a shorter cut got before me, and were now waiting to cut off my retreat.

What was to be done?—An instant I stopped and hesitated: but with a dozen rascals at my heels, and only two in front, I had no choice, and went forward. At the critical moment I suddenly waved my hand, and, as if addressing some friends stationed near, cried out to fire. The expectant pair on this started back, and looked round, while I seized my opportunity, and darted by them like lightning. They soon, however, rallied again, and one actually had his hand on my shoulder, and was at last going to stop my career, when, wheeling half round, I released my person at the expense of his fingers. The low reef now lay before me under which was moored the boat, and, having scrambled on the platform, I was going to leap in, when, just at that moment a loose stone made me slip, and I plunged into the waves between the rock

and the barge. My child escaped all injury—caught by Cirico, who stood on the projecting ledge waiting my arrival, he was handed safe to the sailors: but his father had less luck. The zeal of the boatmen to disentangle me making them all press upon the side of the boat under which I lay wedged, their collective weight almost crushed me to death; and I was only extricated with a couple of ribs broken, my chest miserably bruised, and my loins almost pierced through by the sharpness of the rocks.

Having fainted the instant I was dragged into the boat, I continued in that state until conveyed on board the ship. There, when various applications had at last brought me to life again, I found that we were under way, and already far out at sea. Still could my first sensations scarcely be called very pleasant. With consciousness had come pain: my inward bruises now tortured me, and occasioned constant expectorations of blood. As soon, however, as I recovered my speech, I inquired after my child, and he was pointed out to me by the captain, lying in a little crib, and just lapsed—after a world of wo—into a profound sleep. When first put on board, the blood mixed with dust which entirely covered his face had rendered him a frightful spectacle: but on the unsightly crust being washed off, there only remained a small cut under his eye, of little importance. His chief distresses had been those of his susceptible mind. Torn in the middle of the night from an elegant mansion, a troop of tender females, and an affectionate nurse, and that to be the object of a sanguinary contest, to receive a smarting wound, and to be put on board a miserable vessel, where nothing met his eye but strange and hard-featured sailors, whose very offices of kindness looked more like acts of violence, no wonder that the sensitive child should at first have shrunk with terror from the novel and appalling scene;—and it was only when exhausted with fruitless entreaties and crying, that he fell into the quiet slumber in which, on recovering my senses, I found the little angel deeply sunk.

Notwithstanding my aches and my weakness, when, after so many difficulties and dangers, I thus saw the object of all my hopes and fears at last safe in my possession, I could not be restrained from giving full scope to my raptures, crawled to the crib intrusted with my treasure, and there—afraid to disturb its soft slumbers—

knelt and gazed upon it in an ecstasy of joy. Scarce could I believe so much loveliness to be my own; and in my transport—as I was afterward told—I laughed and cried in turn, until the whole crew thought me positively crazed. By degrees, however, I became somewhat more composed; but as the ferment of my joy abated, my pains put in their claims afresh, until at last, unable any longer to bear an upright posture, I lay down by my babe, awaiting the moment when, breaking from his sleep, he should leave me at liberty to press him to my bosom.

Far different from mine, however, were, on first awaking, my boy's own emotions. The moment he unclosed his eyes, a look of terror overcast his sweet countenance. He stared fearfully around, seemed awhile wholly lost in amazement at things so new and strange, and then, recollecting the change he had experienced, burst into a flood of tears, and loudly called his paramana. In vain I addressed him in the most soothing language—saying I was his father, and my care for my child should exceed all other care. His only answer was, to entreat I would restore him to the friends from whom I had stolen him; and on my stating the impossibility of granting his petition, he loaded me with all the innocent invectives which his galled imagination could suggest. No peace-offering of which I could think was accepted, whether addressed to the eye or the palate; all my gifts were spurned, and only a fast, protracted long beyond the usual period, could for an instant make hunger impose silence on grief. Reluctantly my Alexis then consented to take some food at my hands;—and this was the first paternal office I ministered to my child.

For several days I myself continued to want the nursing I bestowed. It was only while I lay motionless on my back that I felt any relief. The smallest exertion renewed all my agonies, and called forth fresh streams of blood from my chest. Insensibly, however, the symptoms of an internal injury became less alarming; the broken ribs seemed to knit again, and the external bruises healed apace: but I remained languid, incapable of enduring the least fatigue, totally bereft of appetite, and seldom visited by refreshing slumbers.

Those of my child were my only cordial. Determined not to be disheartened by his first repulses, which only showed the steadiness of his infant mind, I continued my

endearments with unwearied perseverance, until at last I gained his good-will and his confidence. Many, it is true, were the days ere I could drive from his memory the constant thoughts of his regretted home; and even after he seemed in general reconciled to the change, he would still, at particular hours, and sometimes in the very midst of his mirth and laughter, display a sudden revulsion of features, and break into fresh and poignant paroxysms of grief: but in the yet soft and pliant organs of his infant brain the impression of things and persons wholly gone by were gradually effaced, and the later objects which replaced these stamped on it their fresher and more recent forms with at least equal force: he accustomed himself to his situation and recovered his serenity. His anxious mind became susceptible of a new species of uneasiness—that of losing sight of me; and at last won over entirely by my love, he transferred to me all the warm affections of his susceptible heart.

He even gave me more than he had given yet; for, to the singularly early development of his reason and moral feeling, his former guardians had not yet thought of addressing themselves; and by appealing to the first of these new-expanding faculties, I obtained over him a stronger hold, while I paid him a more flattering homage than any one else yet had done. I had begun by consoling him. It was he now who, whenever I appeared ill, endeavoured to comfort me, watched every change in my countenance, and studied to alleviate every symptom of my complaint; amused me with his prattle when I felt in spirits, and lay down in silence by my side when I looked dejected and sorrowful. How, therefore, in the absence of all other feelings, and on the cessation of every other tie, I began to dote on him, no words can express. Hour after hour I hung over his cherub face, contemplating as in a mirror that of his lovely and unhappy mother; and many a time, when his heavenly smile beamed upon me, when his little arms hung round my neck, and when his lips imprinted soft kisses on my cheek, I thought, “Anastasi-
us, Anastasi-
us, what hast thou done to deserve so much bliss! Tremble lest it should prove a honeyed cup, offered to thy lips by an avenging Providence, only for an instant to be tasted—then dashed to the ground!”

Our voyage was prosperous enough until we got into the latitude of Cerigo. There a perverse tramontana seemed to lie in wait with no other object than to shut

against us the narrow entrance of the Adriatic. If now and then the wind did come about for a moment, we no sooner began to make a little way than, as if on purpose to mock us, it immediately again shifted back to its old quarter. It afforded a Maltese privateer every convenience for making us bring to ; and the ship's papers being deemed somewhat suspicious, and the cargo Turkish property outright, the vessel was compelled to change its course for Malta ; there to undergo legal investigation. That island wanted corn, and the captain himself seemed to have no objection to a shorter voyage and a better market. Useless, under such circumstances, would have been the opposition of a passenger. What is he by the side of the cargo—by that of a single bale of goods ? and I comforted myself with the thought that I should sooner be on land, and more speedily obtain medical advice.

A lazaretto is a sort of purgatory, intervening between the regions of infidelity and the realms of true belief ; and quarantine may be termed an ordeal through which all must pass, who, coming from the one, seek admittance into the other. Arrived in mine at Malta, I employed the period of confinement required to prove my freedom from one sort of disease, in taking remedies for another, less violent—but alas ! more tenacious. The inward soreness continued unabated, spite of all the emollients and drugs liberally supplied me from the medicine-chest of a traveller, who had been encaged, on his return from a voyage to the Levant, about the same time with myself.

Designing, I suppose, to write a book, this gentleman seemed as anxious to extend his knowledge with regard to the nations he had just quitted, as I felt desirous of acquiring information with respect to those whom I was coming among ; whence our conversation chiefly turned upon the difference between the natives of the East and those of the West. The strong predestinarian principles of the former were a topic which my friend was particularly fond of handling. Nothing, he averred, surprised him so much as the tenaciousness with which ideas of this sort seemed to have clung even to one so unprejudiced in other things as myself :—" And yet," cried he, " what can be at once more inconsistent in itself, and more injurious in its effects, than a conviction that, whatever may be the nature of intervening occurrences, certain ultimate events—such as the choice of a wife, the birth of a child,

the accession to an estate, the hour of death, or our state in the life hereafter—must still take the same course. It is a doctrine destructive of all exertion, and inimical to all prudence. It paints wisdom attended with no advantage, and virtue productive of no reward.”

I entirely agreed with my friend; and only added, that the doctrine he reprobated was the very doctrine which—in as far as it every where broke the connexion between cause and effect—must be the first to fall away, where predestination, instead of only being adopted by halves, and limited to a few of the most conspicuous events of our lives, was extended to all the minutest occurrences in the universe, without any exception whatsoever.

“As to the partial preordination,” said I, “which you justly reject, I too reject it, and do so precisely from believing in preordination as a universal condition of things created, which admits of no deviation, however trifling; from conceiving the connexion between cause and effect, beginning with the origin of the sensible world, to suffer no interruption until its end; from feeling assured that there is always a preponderating tendency to whatever actually takes place; from conceiving that even where man appears to possess the greatest latitude of deliberation, motives anterior to, or independent of, his volition, can alone after all put an end to his suspense, and determine his will; from regarding what in human beings is most pre-eminently dignified with the name of free agency, as, after all, consisting in nothing more than the faculty of founding their choice upon the suggestions of that experience and the dictates of that reason, whose extent and soundness must still depend upon extraneous and incidental circumstances; and, in fine, from considering entire free agency (and without being entire, free agency cannot subsist at all) as an attribute wholly inapplicable to the creature man, incomprehensible by human intellect, and only appertaining to that Deity which is equally incomprehensible in all its attributes.”

“And do you not,” cried my friend, “bold as you seem in your opinions, shrink from the consequences of such a doctrine?”

“It is my very timidity,” answered I, “which leads me to assert it. My mind possesses not the courage to reject that which, the further I look into the past, the more firmly I find it founded on every basis of experience and analogy, merely in view of some uncertain consequences

to which it may only seem to lead, from my still dim and imperfect insight into the future. However," added I, after some further reflection, "the worst consequence I can thus far perceive to arise from supposing all things alike preordained, is exemption from responsibility and punishment hereafter for such actions here below as have been necessarily performed—a thing which I for one cannot think much to be deprecated."

"A worse consequence attending your doctrine," replied my friend, "than mere retrospective punishments in eternity, when sin can no longer be continued, would be the want of motives for making sacrifices to virtue in this transitory life."

"There we differ completely," exclaimed I, "for since things are not only preordained, but preordained in such a manner that already in this world order, regularity, and virtue ultimately produce benefits which cannot arise from disorder, irregularity, and vice, it follows that the more universally this preordination is seen and acknowledged, the stronger will be the incitement to acting rightly. Where ignorance or passion still continue to overlook or disregard these nearer motives, the fear of the remoter punishments in another existence has seldom been found to produce any effectual check—and at any rate can stamp little merit on the forbearance."

"But," rejoined my friend, "what signifies it that man should, through insight into such a preordination, feel the superior advantages of good, and the ill effects of evil, in our present state; above all, why should he take the trouble of preaching them to others: why should he strive either to induce his neighbours to virtue, even by the promise of temporal rewards, or withhold them from vice by the threats of temporal punishments, if man is deprived of his free agency?—Thus, tied hands and feet, we have nothing to do but to lie still, and be swept down the stream of our uncontrollable destiny!"

"Quite the contrary!" said I; "for if by some fortunate accident, or some greater reach of understanding, a man happens, independent of any merit or design of his own, to have observed, or to have been taught, that good is more beneficial than evil; and thence to have, through an irresistible impulse, conceived a desire to diffuse that useful discovery or doctrine, for the purpose of extending its desirable fruits, he will feel more anxious so to do, he will with greater zeal bend all his efforts to that purpose,

if convinced that his own influence may in its turn irresistibly sway his neighbour's mind and will, than if persuaded that after all his toil that neighbour must still preserve his free agency as undiminished as before, still feel equally devoid as before of any superior inclination to virtue, and still retain all his pristine power of equally taking the wrong way as the right.

"In a future more perfect state of things," added I, "the connexion between good actions and beneficial results, more immediate in itself, must also be by more enlightened minds so much more promptly felt, as to leave an inclination to evil a thing no longer possible, to render virtue as well as happiness the universal lot, and to make the difference between those that have been more or less a prey to ignorance and temptation in this transitory life only to consist in that which in fact alone preserves stings sufficient for a sensitive mind—in their retrospections!"

Here the lazaretto bell interrupted the discussion; and we separated, neither of course in the least convinced by the arguments of the other, or, perhaps, by his own. How much my sentiments at least have since changed!—but is this wonderful, when at the very instant that my reasonings, or, if you please, my sophistry, took the direction described, my feelings already inclined in a wholly opposite direction?

In fact, the thought which at the time occupied me most constantly was, whether, on entering Christendom, I should make a solemn and public abjuration of Islamism, or content myself with sliding back unperceived into the bosom of the church. The latter had been the mode of proceeding recommended by the friend intrusted with the letter from Trieste, and who had chiefly promoted my voyage to the West. "Why," used he to say, "make your return to the faith of your fathers, which in reality can only be an act of the mind, a spectacle for the multitude? It is a thing more likely to scandalize than to edify; to remind people that the church suffered an infidelity, than that it recovered a stray sheep;" and my reason gave assent to the remark, though my heart recoiled from the counsel. I felt as if it wanted the outward show of penitence and demonstration of sorrow, to atone for its errors, suffering to hush its remorse, and tears to wash out its stains. But I considered that a measure of which the publicity must so greatly affect my situation in

society, should not be embraced without the sanction of the relation whom I was going to join; nay, I even felt some objections to it on the score of a still nearer and dearer tie; for as every day increased my love for my boy, it also strengthened my reluctance to his witnessing my penance, and suspecting my guilt. What parent but must wish for the esteem of his child! I therefore thought it best at all events to defer gratifying the curious with an act of ostentatious humility, and cursing Moham-med and the Koran in ceremony, until my arrival at Trieste; and in the mean time, only to avail myself of the deep solitude and the high walls of my temporary prison, to resume in silence the solemn rites of my ancestors, and my old and often regretted Christian name of Anastasius.

Determined to shake off as much as possible all that marked the native of the East, and to adopt all that might assist me to assimilate with the children of the West, I proceeded from the inward to the outward man; but though my person was no longer as erst the dearest idol of my heart, I yet continued sufficiently impressed with the advantage of good looks to feel a very different sensation on quitting the Osmanlee attire from that which I had experienced on doffing the santon's rags. It seemed to me a sort of degradation to exchange the rich and graceful garb of the East, which either shows the limbs as nature moulded them, or makes amends for their concealment by ample and majestic drapery, for a dress which confines without covering, disfigures without protecting, gives the gravest man the air of a mountebank, and, from the uncouth shape of the shreds sowed together, only looks like the invention of penury for the use of beggars; and when I came to mutilating my very person, to cutting into its quick,—when, without being able to give my face a feminine softness, I was only going to deprive it of the signs of manhood—to sever from my lips my long-cherished mustachios,—I own it required all the philosophical reflections I could muster on the nothingness of a few hairs, to persuade me to lay the fearful steel to their roots.

But what was the difficulty of changing the outward trappings of the body to that of dismissing the habits rooted in the inmost recesses of the mind? what was that of adopting the dress which the tailor could model to that of assuming manners which must be the result of

the nicest observation and the longest practice? In the East, each different age, and sex, and nation, and rank, and profession, however closely intermixed with the others, still retains its peculiar garb and formulas, its stated place and boundaries, as distinctly marked as they are immutably fixed. In the East, centuries succeed centuries; new generations step on those which have gone before them, and empires themselves are founded and are destroyed, without the limits that circumscribe the different races of men and orders of society being confounded or transgressed. In the East, nothing in point of forms, of address, and of manners is indefinite or arbitrary, or mutable, or left to the impulse of the moment, or the taste of the individual. In the East, therefore, it is easy to learn by rote the unchangeable exigences of society; and every individual, whatever situation he may obtain—whether from a slave he becomes a master, from a civilian a soldier, or from a subject a sovereign—immediately knows how to fit himself to his new place, and how to act his new part, void of embarrassment and awkwardness; nay, of vulgarity.

Far different was my prospect in the West! There, on the contrary, whatever the eye could view, or the mind comprehend, from the most fundamental organization of states to the superficial gloss of social intercourse, seemed unfixed, discretionary, subject to constant revolution, and, like the coat of the chameleon, borrowing a different hue from every passing cloud. There each different sex, age, nation, rank, and profession, instead of the strongly marked outlines and forcibly contrasted colours of the East, on all sides only showed blending shades, evanescent forms, prominences rubbed away, and features confounded—tones, looks, and language distinguished only by gradations so imperceptible, by shades so delicate, that a long study alone could disclose the theory, and long habit alone teach the performance of their ultimate refinements. There the prejudices of the individual, constantly at variance with the laws of the land and the duties imposed by religion, uniformly clashing with the latitude required by custom, were each to be in turns distinguished, and yet blended—obeyed, and yet disregarded, without the act appearing an effort, or the effect producing a discordance; nay, there, the mind, always kept on the stretch, was not even allowed to unbend in repose after business was ended, but must still,

in the hours of leisure—not hours of relaxation—encounter the new toil of constantly supplying matter for discourse, suited at once to the peculiar character of the speaker and to those of the diversified listeners.

Yet was I—alone, untutored, and uncounselled—to imbodily with my original substance, ideas, and habits these intangible new forms, and these indefinable new shades, which many of the natives themselves but awkwardly wear; and that at an age, too, when the cast of my own character was fixed and stiffened into irremediable permanence by the cold hand of time: on pain of exciting the sneers of the cold, fastidious, unsympathizing spectators of the new stage which I was going, uncheered and unsupported, to tread. Arduous was the task—small the hope of success!

In fact, whether from the loss of health and the prostration of spirits I had laboured under, since the accident which marked the last pressure of my feet on the shores of the East, or whether from the more appalling form assumed by the new objects before me as I approached them nearer, I every day began to contemplate with increasing awe the idea of encountering a new world with which I had nothing in common. Every day that new world presented itself to my imagination more as a gloomy desert, to me without interest, without friend, and without happiness. The people of Europe seemed heartless, the virtues of the Franks frigid, the very crimes of the West dull and prosaic; and I was like a plant which, reared in all the warmth of a hothouse, is going all at once to be launched into all the inclemency of an atmosphere ripe with chilling blasts and nipping frosts.

Far, therefore, from waiting with impatience for the period that was to dismiss me from the narrow cell of my quarantine into the unlimited space of this new scene, I could not help looking forward to it with trepidation. As long as I remained within the pale of the establishment devoted to purification from my Eastern stains, I felt as if only standing on the extremest verge of my native realms; as if not yet entirely removed from all contact with the parental soil, and not yet entirely beyond the influence of the paternal atmosphere; as if still able to fall back at will upon the fostering bosom on which I had been reared, and to regain by a timely retreat all my native rights and privileges; but the threshold of the lazaretto once crossed—the barred doors of the quaran-

tine-ground once closed behind me—it seemed as if a barrier deep as the centre of the earth, high as the heavenly vault, was to rise between the scenes of my youth and the remainder of my dreary existence; as if nothing that had been could preserve the last connexion with what was still to be.

When, therefore, the hour of my liberation struck,—when I was bidden to walk forth, ready to take my flight, and, like the bird driven from its downy nest, to plunge into boundless space,—I shrunk back, and for a few moments still doubted whether I should not after all forego my rash design, and, instead of walking forth among strangers, rather stay and seek the first vessel in which I might return to the genial shores of the East.

But one great, one mighty thought superseded all others, and determined me to proceed. It was not for myself I went, it was for my child; it was to perfect his education, to secure his future welfare, to render him in all respects a man different from his father. This idea gave resolution to my mind. I saw my luggage removed, took my Alexis by the hand, and hastily walked out.

Yet when, arrived in the midst of the space that separates the precincts of the lazaretto from the remainder of the Maltese territory, I heard the fatal gates, only opened to let me out, again close with hollow clang, the awful sound went through my inmost marrow; my heart seemed to sink within me; and turning round for the last time to contemplate the porch whence I had reluctantly gone forth, I could not help once more bidding all I left farewell. “Glorious sun of the East!” cried I, with faltering tongue; “balmy breath of the Levant! warm affections of my beloved Greece! adieu for ever! The season of flowers is gone by; that of storms and whirlwinds howls before me. Among the frosts of the North I must seek my future fortunes; a cradle of ice must rock my future hopes. For the bleak wastes and black firs of Gothic climes I am going to exchange the myrtle groves of Grecian valleys; and perhaps on the farther borders of the chilly Neva it may be my fate to cherish the last remembrance of Ionia and of Chio!”

Thus saying, I took my cherub in my arms, pressed him against my panting bosom, inclined my face against his downy cheek, and went on.

CHAPTER XX.

ANXIOUS to gain the place of my destination, I hired a speronara to convey me to Sicily. As I passed under the galleys in Valetta harbour, and contemplated the batteries bristling on its shore, "See," said to me one of my boatmen, "those engines of war employed to diffuse a religion of peace, by men who take the vows of priests, and lead the lives of soldiers. One would suppose man short-lived and perishable enough by nature to have no need of so many contrivances of art still to abridge his brief existence, and that not piecemeal, but wholesale; but so it is, notwithstanding; and you who come from Turkey will find, that in Christendom the trade of inflicting death on one half of its population is precisely that by which the other half lives." I had, indeed, heard before that standing armies were become both the shield and the gangrene of all European states.

In coasting Sicily's jagged shores I had a view of Etna's furnace wrapped in eternal snow; landed at Messina, and there soon re-embarked straight for Naples.

The inhabitants of this capital, built upon a volcano, seemed to me completely gone out of their senses. From the lowest lazzaroni up to their fishing, fowling lazzaroni king, they were all rejoicing in a peace just concluded with revolutionary France, as madly as if war could thenceforth be no more. I carried letters from Malta to two personages of the *nobiltà*—a gentleman and a lady; and had the extreme satisfaction of finding myself precisely recommended to the two people in all Naples who hated each other most cordially. M. de Silva was a wit. On my first visit to him, he took particular pains to warn me against the least attempt at consistency in my words or my actions. "Like our bodies," he observed, "our minds, our opinions, and our feelings must necessarily change every day; and he who for the sake of that chimerical consistency is determined ever to adhere to what in some luckless moment he uttered, must sooner or later renounce all pretensions to truth." To Silva's honour be it spoken, the doctrine which he preached he likewise practised,

Me. de B——, being no wit, on the contrary, made that consistency which Silva regarded as the mark of a servile, plodding spirit her principal boast. It had not prevented her, it is true, from changing her lovers very frequently; but then it had made her take particular pains to retain them as friends. Finding her speak philosophically of her own conduct, and in the same strain in which she would have canvassed that of a neighbour, I one day begged of her to explain to me how, with so much freedom of manner, she had contrived to incur so little censure. "By leaving my reputation," answered she, "as all good Christians should do all their concerns, entirely to the care of Providence; showing others the indulgence I wanted for myself, and not imagining that to bespatter my neighbours could wipe away a spot from my own character." This was not wit, assuredly, nor any thing approaching it; but to my mind a thing of better wear.

Wishing to cultivate the society of both my friends with equal care, I took it into my head to patch up a peace between them. This was more difficult than that with France. When I told Madame de B—— of the encomiums which Signor Silva frequently passed upon her merit, "When was I sufficiently intimate with the fellow," cried she, in a passion, "to enable him to know for what to praise me?"

Excluded himself from the lady's parties, Silva undertook to estrange me from her circle; and for this purpose proposed to take me to a dinner of literary friends, "with whom," he added, "it was absolutely necessary I should be acquainted."

I always bowed to necessity; but of the acquaintance I found I had little chance with men who all fancied to have rehearsed their parts beforehand. Accordingly, I hardly opened my lips; but Silva, who fancied he had shone, returned home in raptures with his day. "Had you sufficient quickness," cried he, "barbarian as you are, to observe the incessant circulation of the most ethereal wit? How at first a few light sparks began to flash at random from different points of the electric circle, each in turns eliciting fresh scintillations from the opposite quarter, until at last the whole table fired up into one single uninterrupted blaze of the most brilliant eloquence, repartee, and bon-mot! What preparation, what vigilance, what readiness such conversation requires! What triumphs and what mortifications it causes! Depend upon

it, the repose of half the party has been disturbed for a fortnight by the good things the other half said this evening."

"Charming effects," cried I, "of a convivial meeting."

"And yet," resumed Silva, "you have not seen the genius of the party. He likes to make himself in request. To-morrow we go and rouse him in his own den."

A part of this den consisted of a handsome library, into which visitors were shown while the genius prepared for his impromptu effusions. The levee had already begun. Three or four personages occupied the farthest recess of the room. One was humming a bravura air as he walked backwards and forwards; another trying steps and attitudes; a third poring upon a huge folio of prints; and the fourth, the moment we walked in, turned from us so abruptly to contemplate a small picture hung up in a niche, that I never saw his face.

My own attention was wholly engaged by the books. Those I had seen at Pera seemed to me a schoolboy's bundle compared with this abyss of knowledge. Besides the shelves against the wall, absolutely bending under the weight of authors already marshalled in regular battle array against every denomination of ignorance—some heavy armed, others as light troops, others again as voltigeurs, belonging to no division in particular, but hovering in turns over the outskirts of each—the very floor was covered with piles of still unsorted science, lying strewed about in a confused mass. I was amazed at the sight. "How many square feet of reading," cried I, "are here collected in one single apartment! How many ideas, good, bad, indifferent, true, erroneous, and contradictory, are jumbled together, some lying, some standing, some on end, and some, I apprehend, head over heels! and will my poor Alexis have to cram all this lumber into his brain ere he can pass among Franks for a man of understanding?"

"If he did," replied Silva, "I am afraid he would scarcely have a spare corner left for his own ideas; but the thing is wholly out of the question. Formerly, no dust equalled that of books for blinding people's eyes; modern wits wipe it clean away; they write, indeed, but no one reads. Even philosophers have ceased to prize knowledge the more for being at second-hand. Men of talent now buy libraries only to say they never look at their contents."

A clatter of doors and a shuffle of slippers now announced the approach of the genius. He appeared with locks dishevelled and a wild stare, intended for a look of inspiration, ran up to us in an ecstacy, embraced Silva, then me, then asked who I was, then congratulated himself upon beholding a Greek, and me upon beholding him; then dragged us by main force into what he called his sanctum; then told us the quartetto we had left in his anteroom consisted of a poet, a scene-painter, a musical composer, and ballet-master, all waiting his directions for the new opera; then complained of the endless labours his taste entailed upon him; then showed us the list of the virtuosi and virtuose he patronised; then ran out as if bitten by the tarantula; then came in again making a thousand apologies; then informed us that Horace had no energy, and Virgil no pathos; then recited an ode, three sonnets, and half the first canto of an epic poem of his own composing; then stopped to receive our applause, and to contemplate his person in the looking-glass; then took a few lozenges to ease his chest; then asked me whether I did not infinitely prefer the misty sublime—that of Ossian—to that of Homer; then threw out a witicism or two which he laughed at most heartily, and we also, out of complaisance; then entreated to see me every day except six of the week on which he was engaged; then made an appointment with us at the masked ball at San Carlo; and then dismissed us to return to the sons of Apollo he had left in his library.

Forced to join the party to the masquerade, I found but little pleasure in this, to me, novel entertainment. At first, indeed, the sight dazzled, but it soon tired, and at last annoyed me. I could not get rid of a soothsayer who had singled me out as the object of his pursuit. Succeeding at last to take hold of my arm, and putting his mouth to my ear,—“You think this form a borrowed one,” he whispered; “undecieve yourself. People put on masks to exhibit their characters undisguised. I really see all that is hidden from others.”

“Then who is it you are speaking to?” was the first question I put to try him.

“A stranger,” was the answer.

“Doubtless! but from what country?”

“From one to which you have sworn in your wrath never to return.”

“My name?”

"An appellation very early forsaken."

"You have seen me unmasked."

"I could even tell you what your own newly adopted clothes conceal."

"What?"

"An ass's skin!"

Here I began to wax wroth; but soon recollected that Spiridion's tablets were composed of the substance so called.* To no mortal in Christendom, however, had I yet imparted that sacred memento still worn next my heart: "Who can you be?" I therefore now cried, with increasing surprise.

"*That* I came not here to tell: but to-morrow night at the same hour meet me here again; and when you see me retire, dare to follow me."

I promised, and came:—we withdrew together; and, after going the length of three or four streets, the wizard entered a mean-looking house, where I was ushered by him into a room dimly lighted, up four pair of stairs.

Here my entertainer unmasked, and to my surprise showed features of which I had not the smallest remembrance. Still it was something to see a real face of any sort in so suspicious a place.

"Now tell me—" said I.

"Questions," interrupted the stranger, "are here only answered by the dead:—evoke whom you please."

In faltering accents I named Euphrosyné; the wizard shook his head. Then Helena; he frowned. Anagnosti then! "What demon," he now cried, "makes you enumerate all those whom you have injured?"

"You cannot raise spirits," answered I, sneeringly.

"Name some being you have served, ere you judge," replied the wizard: "Cirico, for instance."

"Cirico is alive."

"He is dead: last night, at Alexandria, he fell into a coma, and never woke again."

"Then be it Cirico." And Cirico appeared.

The poet so evidently showed as much of flesh and blood as ever had entered into his spare composition, that I ran to embrace him; but I grasped only unsubstantial air! Startled at the circumstance, I stepped back: again the spectre advanced, and probably by this time I

* Spiridion's tablets were composed of the substance so called—*Peau d'âne* is the special name given in French to tablets of that description.

looked a little scared ; for, on the phantom opening its mouth to begin a solemn speech, it fixed its eyes upon me, and burst out laughing.

“Where ghosts laugh,” cried I, “there needs must be a joke ;” and I again sprang forward. Again the figure vanished ; but this time, no longer dismayed, I rushed on, overset every thing in my way, and groped about until I hauled forth from behind a table the real Cirico, whose image only I had thus far seen, reflected by some optical contrivance.

“And so I catch you again,” I cried ; “and at your old tricks too !”

“You do,” was the poet’s reply ; “but no longer unwillingly : however—as this is but an uncomfortable place—we shall leave my Gaetano to settle matters here, and adjourn to a coffee-house, where I will tell you all.”

Seated in the *bottega*, over our *rinfreschi*,—“When you quitted Egypt,” began the improvisatore, “I had just killed the last princess of my tragedy, and secured the last sequin of my patron. It therefore became expedient to return to Italy—were it only to claim that diamond on your finger there, which you promised me for my services, but in your fainting fit on the beach at Alexandria forgot to bestow. A plausible pretence for leaving the consul was the least of my difficulties. I asserted that the operas which I had spouted were mine ; he claimed them as his ; we quarrelled, and we parted. I soon found a passage straight for this place, and in this place a patron in that transcendent genius under whose roof—”

“I yesterday,” cried I, finishing the sentence, “met you, afraid of being recognised, and in company with a dancer, a fiddler, and a scene-shifter. But take your stone, and—”

“Receive a billetdoux in return,”—resumed Cirico, handing me a letter, of which the very form and superscription bespoke a female writer.

“What,” exclaimed I, “Apollo turned Mercury !”—But my suspicions for once did the poet injustice : the letter was dated from Alexandria, and the signature that of the consulless, my defeated adversary.

“You know,” she wrote, “how at Smyrna I found, in a miserable hovel, an infant unblest by a parent’s care. Both nurse and child were pining for want ; both revived under my roof : but soon the affections of the servant wandered from her charge to a young Taooshan, while

mine became wholly centred in the lovely boy. Seeing him hourly grow in all that is excellent, I became so wrapped up in the feelings and duties of a mother, as to forget that there still existed a father—when in an evil hour you appeared!

“Parental rights over the offspring of unwedded love are unacknowledged in law, and by you could not even be maintained in equity. Your child must have perished but for the care of strangers: and, after strangers alone had cultivated its young mind, as well as supplied all its wants—alone had rescued it from ignorance and from vice, as well as from misery and death—it belonged not to you to reap what you had not sowed. To have yielded up into your unhallowed hands the angel, whose keen sensibilities I had pledged myself by the very pains taken to cherish them never to expose to the risk of being wounded; to have tamely suffered that angel to pass—as it was likely to do under your guidance—not only from consequence to contempt, and from care to neglect, but from purity to corruption, and from happiness to misery, I must have been bereft of common humanity: and had you possessed the feelings of a father, you yourself must have wished the tried and tender guardian of your offspring to have ever remained, as she was become, its mother.

“You did not: you recovered your boy, and rendered me anew childless. Yet such is the love I still bear your Alexis, that for his sake I even humble myself before you, and stoop to prefer a prayer to him whom otherwise I must have cursed; and it is this:—that you will duly weigh in your mind the situation and prospects of which your rashness has robbed your child, by wresting him from my arms; and that you will thence deduce how heavy is become in his behalf your own responsibility, and how much it behoves you to do, in order to make him amends for all he has lost. Perform this with religious intentness; be as tender a father as you have been a thoughtless one; and you may still at her last hour obtain the blessings of the once happy

“ATHENAI8.”

This letter leaving me little in a mood to enjoy Cirico's humour, I went home immediately, and over the very pillow of my child, already hushed in sweet repose, vowed rigidly to perform its contents. Many years before I

had received a similar appeal to my parental feelings, in behalf of another offspring of my lawless passions, by another hapless mother, like Euphrosyné, deserted and dead. The two epistles seemed intended for companions. "If I live," thought I, "they shall be hung up in my chamber, be ever under my eyes;—and by deserving the blessings promised in the one, I may, perhaps, still avert the curses threatened in the other!"

Meanwhile, I determined to hasten to my destination: for, so far from the pharmacopœia of Italy re-establishing my Greek constitution, I had fresh and frequent returns of aggravated illness, and felt anxious at least to leave my boy an orphan only among such as were able to supply a father's care. On mentioning to Silva my intention of quitting Naples,—“Good!” said he; “I too want to change its air, in order to absent myself from a lady who has made love to me so long that she now persuades herself it was I who made love to her, and resents her own mistake as my infidelity. We will travel together.”

And so we did. For the first time in my life I journeyed in a square box on wheels: two servants having their backs, and the two gentlemen their faces turned towards the way we went; while my little Alexis, the most delighted and the most amusing of the party, sat between us like a gem surrounded by its inferior accompaniments.

As I approached the ancient mistress of the world, the eternal city, the destroyer of Greece, my heart beat high. But, alas! If he who names Rome names energy, names strength—he who beholds her in her present fallen state beholds nothing but feebleness and imbecility—he beholds the prostrate members of a giant, and corruption at work among their mouldering remains. Sheep graze round the altar where captive monarchs were slaughtered in the name of Jove the great and the good, and silence reigns in that arena where eighty thousand spectators could at once count the pangs of wretches, tortured in frightful reality to represent some ancient fable. The very monuments of a more recent date only arise, like fresher weeds, out of the ashes of former decay;—they are only the fungus, starting forth from the creviced base of some nobler pile, and which, by feeding on that fabric's substance, achieves its destruction.

Silva seemed to enjoy my disappointment; satire was his profession. “These people,” said he, “cannot prevent the sun of their fine climate from shining at its stated

hours, but they make their streets impervious to its cheering light :—a deep gloom meets the eye wherever towers man's abode. They cannot prohibit the rich vegetation of their fertile soil from diffusing its fragrance, but they collect every villanous odour to subdue nature's sweets, and convert one sense at least into means of torture. They cannot cancel the spring's ancient privilege of enamelling alike with flowers the hill and the valley, the garden and desert, but they tarry in their fetid town till the magic has vanished, and autumn sears the leaf and imbrowns the parched meadow :—no one thinks of country rambles before the summer's close. They cannot stop the crystal rills while gushing down the mountain's slope, but they suffer their aqueducts to ooze out the captive stream, and to convert the healthy plain into a pestilential marsh. They cannot dive into the inmost recesses of the human brain, to nip in its very first germs every brightest faculty ; but, conducting its developments as the Chinese do that of their peach and plum-trees, they encompass each tender shoot of the intellect with so many minute fetters—religious, political, and social—that dwarfs are produced where giants were intended. Their manuscripts are not suffered to be inspected ; their pictures are left to rot : their very city has been allowed to slip from its seven hills into the sink between. They clip their trees into men and their men into singers. In their vaunted Last Judgment heaven appears far more dismal than hell. Their law deems infamous, not the thief, but the magistrate—the bargello. Their tribunals sell justice to the highest bidder ; their churches protect from it the criminal ; and the huge temple on which we now stand (for from St. Peter's proud dome went forth this bitter diatribe)—built at the expense of all Christendom on a foundation which stands awry, and with a cupola which yawns with rents,—contains absolutions for every sin as well as confessionals appropriated to every language. A priest, habituated only to the duties of humility and obedience during the greatest portion of his life, near its close becomes the sovereign, and assumes the supreme power when his failing faculties fit him to think only of death : and as each inferior member of the imbecile government, like its tottering chief, must forego a lawful lineage, so are of each statesman the views oblique, and the ways devious and crooked. The word virtue, indeed, exists in the language, but is applied to

skill in singing; and as to valour, the former signification of the same word, it is a quality which during so many ages has been let out for hire, first in the gross by the condottiere, and next more in detail by the professed bravo, that it is become discreditable; and cowardice, under the name of caution, forms not only the privilege of the priest, but the pride of the cavalier. Visit a friend in the daytime, and he surveys you through a grated hole in his entrance-door, ere he dares to let you in: venture out at night, and from a distance you are bidden to avert your eyes, lest one murder witnessed should necessitate a second. The very head of the church, when in the holy of the holies, dares not take the consecrated wine except through a gilded reed, lest his lips should suck in poison; and in the heart of his capital the pontiff of Rome keeps in his pay—for the safety of his person—the rude mountaineer of Swisserland, as your Turkish pasha does the barbarian from Epirus and from Coordestan. Thank God, however, this mass of imbecility and vice hies fast to its fate; for if by a late submission which the Romans call a treaty, the rotten grant of St. Peter's rich domain is yet saved a while from utter ruin, its seals are all torn off, and its ornaments effaced.* Nature herself conspires with man in the work of just destruction. In that sky so transparent lurks a permanent poison, which, formerly only creeping like the adder along the hollow valley, now soars like the eagle above the steepest hill, and invades the last abodes once safe from its intrusion. Thus shall soon the world's ancient mistress again return to naught; and as the herdsman erst wandered in solitude where Rome in later days arose, so shall the herdsman again wander in solitude where Rome has ceased to be."

Silva here ending his effusion, we again began to descend the thousand and one steps which we had to my great fatigue ascended. In the midst of our downward progress my companion abruptly stopped short, as if struck with a sudden thought. "So near the abode of your ancient gods," he cried, "they might feel offended if we did not pay them a farewell visit, previous to their forced departure for the banks of the Seine. This is their second grand removal since the days of Praxiteles.—Let us go the Vatican, and see them packing up."

* Its seals are all torn off, and its ornaments effaced—By the treaty of Tolentino, concluded between the pope and Buonaparte, the fairest provinces of the patrimony of St. Peter and the finest statues of the Vatican had been ceded to the French.

Already tired, and somewhat peevish with increasing weakness—"Am I not sick enough," cried I, "of real man, that I must run after his image in stone and brass?" but after some ineffectual resistance, at last suffered myself to be overruled. When, indeed, I beheld what was called the Apollo, the Mercury, the Jupiter, the Venus, and the other gods and goddesses of my forefathers, I cannot deny that I felt pleasure. "And can these fair forms," thought I to myself, "have been the production of demons and witchcraft? Can it be Satan that smiles on those lovely lips? If so, ah, what could withstand his wiles!" and with one deep sigh my heart absolved all paganism. I almost wished to have lived in those ages, and amid that worship whose wrecks still looked so attractive; and I repined at the gloom of a religion whose temples, adorned like charnel-houses, display even in the freshness of the finest marbles the features of death and the forms of corruption.

Scarcely had we reached our lodging, when Silva was called upon by a friend, who advised him to leave Rome immediately, lest he should be entombed alive in the mausoleum which Emperor Adrian only destined for his repose after death.

"What have I done," cried Silva, astonished, "to be thus treated to the honours of a state criminal?—Assassination, blasphemy, profanation, would have been overlooked in this indulgent place: but can I have said that the pope starved his subjects to enrich his nephew Braschi, or that the nephew sold the state to buy the Pontine marshes?—can I have maintained that Prince Borghese's gems were modern, or Princess Lanti's charms antique? In fine, can I have admired Pasquino's wit, or abused Pius's leg?"

"You once returned a bow from the arch-fiend Cagliostro," answered the friend, "and asserted, that freemasonry need not always harbour treason."

"If so," exclaimed Silva, "let us depart this instant! From real offences I might, at Rome, at least have escaped. With imaginary crimes there is no contending."

Accordingly we set off the same evening, in the very teeth of the still white and threatening Apennines—I, leaving a hundred plans unexecuted, and performances unfinished, connected with my Alexis. On contemplating from the last hill which allowed a view of Rome—as if painted on the bar of gold left by its setting sun—that

long range of purple domes so beautiful in its appearance, and yet destined to so speedy a decline, I felt amid my own accelerating steps towards dissolution some comfort in the thought that, like the lowliest individuals, the proudest empires of the present day were hastening towards a certain and a proximate end.

The ascent of the mountains seemed to last an eternity. At Narni we found every horse in the place engaged for Arezzo; at Terni the same; and the same at Spoleto. Nor was it otherwise at Foligno. I began to complain, but excited little sympathy. "When saints perform miracles," was the answer, "sinners should stay at home." A person inclined to cavil might have replied, that three drunken cobblers reeling in a wine-vault could see the madonna roll her eyes about any where as well as at Arezzo; but the prodigy was become a mine of wealth to its before-distressed church, and I held my tongue. "Truth," as Silva observed, "is a bad travelling companion."

After passing through several cities which looked like the deserted habitations of the Titans, in which had crept a race of pigmies, we arrived at Loretto; where, pulled one way by a guardian of the holy house, anxious that I should wipe away my old sins, and the other by a fair vender of crucifixes, desirous that I should commence a new score, I was only saved from leaving my cloak in the hands of the syren by a pilgrim who had stolen it before.

At Ancona Silva pressed me to go on with him to Venice. "The sun of St. Mark, indeed, is set," he cried; "its proud aristocrats were so long considering to whom they should sell themselves, that the bargain was struck at last without their participation; but, though Austria has finally swallowed up the fat and torpid oyster of the lagunas, the empty shell is still worth beholding.

"Silva," was my answer, "were I still the man I was, I might perhaps (whether right or wrong) wish to become something more than a mere spectator of European changes. At a moment when all the old monarchies of Europe are ploughing up to receive the seeds of a more promising system, I might myself like to assist in somewhere planting that tree without roots of which the fruits are yet worth gathering; but you need only look at me to see that the gods no longer permit my health the exertion, or my spirits the hazard." "Here," added

I, laying my hand on my Alexis's curly head, "is the sole remaining object of all my solicitude. Him I wish to place in a safe harbour. Do you then jolt on to Venice. As to me, I must be carried, as it shall please the winds and waves, to Trieste."

And ill it pleased these capricious, these democratic powers to smoothe my journey in the small felucca in which I embarked, the day after I had celebrated the accomplishment of my boy's fifth year. Scarcely had we seen six hours at sea, when there arose from the north-west a most tremendous storm. We closed our hatches, took in as much sail as possible, and prepared to meet the hurricane. Every instant it increased, and at last the sea ran so high that our deck was completely under water. The vessel soon sprung a leak, and the hold filled so fast that every man who could be spared from the deck ran to the pumps: I among the rest, as soon as I had lashed my poor boy to his crib; though small was my strength, and trifling my assistance.

Contrary to every suggestion of common sense, the reis resolved to run in between the nearest islets on the coast of Dalmatia. It was in vain to represent the danger of striking against some hidden reef, or stranding upon a lee shore; and we only wondered which of the two would be our fate, when providentially the storm abated as suddenly as it had arisen, and enabled us, with our ship full of water, and our rigging all in tatters, to put into a little creek on the island of Melada. Here we found a Ragusan vessel, driven in by the same storm, but with a miserably foul bill of health; insomuch that the crews unguardedly mixing, we learned to our great dismay that we must make up our minds, on our arrival at Trieste, to a fresh quarantine.

I now recollected that just at midnight, and when the storm raged more furiously, a tremendous flash of lightning, which seemed to set the heavens on fire, had for a moment brought before my dazzled eyes the frightful vision of the spectre-ship, doomed, as I was told, ever to sail with unstayed speed round the globe, announcing destruction to the crews to which it showed itself. It appeared as if advancing full sail upon our vessel, and on the point of cutting it in two, when its form again vanished; and I now doubted not that we must all fall victims to the plague: but on inquiry, none save myself had seen the phantom.

CHAPTER XXI.

As soon as the damage was repaired, we again hurried on board and put to sea. All now looked most propitious. Nothing could exceed the serenity of the weather; we scudded right before the wind—now become a steady breeze; and though my health had not greatly benefited by my late severe labour, yet the sea-air seemed a balm destined to heal the injuries of the seawater. My aches were less acute, and my spirits more buoyant than for some time past; and as I lay on the deck basking in the April sun, with the purple dolphins sporting round the ship, and my own little cherub playing by my side, more visions of delights unutterable danced in my imagination, than there sparkled liquid diamonds upon the azure wave. With that yet untasted repose which I should soon enjoy, my ailments, I thought, might still slowly subside: or, if I was doomed never more to recover my former vigour, what then? It was neither in the palæstra nor on the race-ground that I proposed to shine. I should only be the fitter for that tranquil life, henceforth the only object of my tempered wishes. My cousin's letter had promised me a brilliant lot, and what was better—my own pockets ensured me a decent competence. The refinements of a European education should add every external elegance to my boy's innate excellence; and having myself moderately enjoyed the good things of this world, while striving to deserve the better promised in the next, I should, ere my friends became tired of my dotage, resign my last breath in the arms of my child.

The blue sky seemed to smile upon my cheerful thoughts, and the green wave to murmur approbation of my plan. Almighty God! what was there in it so heinous, to deserve that an inexorable fate should cast it to the winds.

In the midst of my dream of happiness, my eye fell upon the darling object in which centred all its sweets. Insensibly my child's prattle had diminished, and had at last subsided in an unusual silence. I thought he looked

pale; his eyes seemed heavy, and his lips felt parched. The rose that very morning still so fresh, so erect on its stalk, at midday hung its heavy head, discoloured, wan, and fading; but so frequently had the billows, during the fury of the storm, drenched my boy's little crib, that I could not wonder he should have felt their effects in a severe cold. I put him to bed, and tried to hush him to sleep. Soon, however, his face grew flushed, and his pulse became feverish. I failed alike in my endeavours to procure him repose and to afford him amusement; but though playthings were repulsed, and tales no longer attended to, still he could not bear me an instant out of his sight; nor would he take any thing except at my hands. Even when—as too soon it did—his reason began to wander, his filial affection retained its pristine hold of his heart. It had grown into an adoration of his equally doting father; and the mere consciousness of my presence seemed to relieve his uneasiness.

Had not my feelings, a few moments only before, been those of such exceeding happiness, I should not so soon perhaps have conceived great alarm; but I had throughout life found every extraordinary burst of joy followed by some unforeseen calamity; and my exultation had just risen to so unusual a pitch, that a deep dismay now at once struck me to the heart. I felt convinced that I had only been carried to so high a pinnacle of joy, in order to be hurled with greater ruin into an abyss of woe. Such became my anxiety to reach Trieste, and to obtain the best medical assistance, that even while the ship continued to cleave the waves like an arrow, I fancied it lay like a log upon the main. How, then, did my pangs increase when, as if in resentment of my unjust complaints, the breeze, dying away, really left our keel motionless on the waters. My anguish baffled all expression.

In truth, I do not know how I preserved my senses, except from the need I stood in of their aid; for while we lay cursed with absolute immobility, and the sun ever found us on rising in the same place where it had left us at setting, my child—my darling child—was every instant growing worse, and sinking apace under the pressure of illness. To the deep and flushing glow of a complexion far exceeding in its transient brilliancy even the brightest hues of health, had succeeded a settled unchanging, deadly paleness. His eye, whose round full orb was wont to beam upon me with mild but fervent radiance,

now dim and wandering, for the most part remained half-closed; and when, roused by my address, the idol of my heart strove to raise his languid look, and to meet the fearful inquiries of mine, he only showed all the former fire of his countenance extinct. In the more violent bursts indeed of his unceasing delirium, his wasting features sometimes acquired a fresh but sad expression. He would then start up, and with his feeble hands clasped together, and big tears rolling down his faded cheeks, beg in the most moving terms to be restored to his home: but mostly he seemed absorbed in inward musings, and, no longer taking note of the passing hour, he frequently during the course of the day moved his pallid lips, as if repeating to himself the little prayer which he had been wont to say at bedtime and at rising, and the blessings I had taught him to add, addressed to his mother in behalf of his father. If—wretched to see him thus, and doubly agonized to think that I alone had been the cause—I burst out into tears, which I strove to hide, his perception of outward objects seemed all at once for a moment to return. He asked me whether I was hurt, and would lament that, young and feeble as he was, he could not yet nurse me as he wished—but promised me better care when he should grow stronger.

In this way hour after hour and day after day rolled on, without any progress in our voyage, while all I had left to do was to sit doubled over my child's couch, watching all his wants, and studying all his looks—trying, but in vain, to discover some amendment. "O for those days," I now thought, "when a calm at sea appeared an intolerable evil, only because it stopped some tide of folly, or delayed some scheme of vice!"

At last, one afternoon when, totally exhausted with want of sleep, I sat down by my child in all the composure of torpid despair, the sailors rushed in one and all—for even they had felt my agony, and doted on my boy. They came to cheer me with better tidings. A breeze had just sprung up! The waves had again begun to ripple, and the lazy keel to stir. As minute pressed on minute, the motion of the ship became swifter; and presently—as if nothing had been wanting but a first impulse—we again dashed through the waves with all our former speed.

Every hour now brought us visibly nearer the inmost recess of the deep Adriatic and the end of our journey.

Pola seemed to glide by like a vision: presently we passed Fiume: we saw Capo d'Istria but a few minutes—at last we descried Trieste itself! Another half-hour, and every separate house became visible; and not long after we ran full sail into the harbour. The sails were taken in, the anchor was dropped, and a boat instantly came alongside.

All the necessary preparations had been made for immediately conveying my patient on shore. Wrapped up in a shawl, he was lifted out of his crib, laid on a pillow, and lowered into the boat, where I held him in my lap, protected to the best of my power from the roughness of the blast and the dashing of the spray, until we reached the quay.

In my distress I had totally forgotten the taint contracted at Melada, and had purposed, the instant we stepped on shore, to carry my child straight to a physician. New anguish pierced my soul when two bayonets crossed upon my breast forced me, in spite of my alternate supplication and rage, to remain on the jettée, there to wait his coming and his previous scrutiny of all our healthy crew. All I could obtain as a special favour was a messenger to hurry his approach; while, panting for his arrival, I sat down with my Alexis in my arms under a low shed which kept off a pelting shower. I scarce know how long this situation lasted. My mind was so wrapped up in the danger of my boy as to remain wholly unconscious of the bustle around, except when the removal of some cask or barrel forced me to shift my station. Yet, while wholly deaf to the unceasing din of the place, I could discern the faintest rumour that seemed to announce the approaching physician. O how I cursed his unfeeling delay! how I would have paved his way with gold, to have hastened his coming!—and yet a something whispered continually in my ear, that the utmost speed of man no longer could avail.

Ah! that, at least, confirmed in this sad persuasion, I might have tasted the heart-rending pleasure of bestowing upon my departing child the last earthly endearments!—but, tranquil, composed, and softly slumbering as he looked, I feared to disturb a repose, on which I founded my only remaining hopes. All at once, in the midst of my despair, I saw a sort of smile light up my darling's features; and, hard as I strove to guard against all vain illusions, I could not at this sight stop a ray of

gladness from gliding unchecked into my trembling heart. Short, however, was the joy: soon vanished the deceitful symptom! On a closer view, it only appeared to have been a slight convulsion which had hurried over my child's now tranquil countenance, as will sometimes dart over the smooth mirror of a dormant lake the image of a bird in the air. It looked like the response of a departing angel to those already on high, that hailed his speedy coming. The soul of my Alexis was fast preparing for its flight.

Lest he might feel ill at ease in my lap, I laid him down upon my cloak, and kneeled by his side to watch the growing change in his features. The present now was all to me; the future I knew I no longer should reck. Feeling my breath close to his cheek, he half-opened his eye, looked as if after a long absence again suddenly recognising his father, and—putting out his little mouth—seemed to crave one last token of love. The temptation was too powerful: I gently pressed my lip upon that of my babe, and gathered from it the proffered kiss. Life's last faint spark was going forth, and I caught it on the threshold. Scarce had I drawn back my face, when all respiration ceased. His eyestrings broke, his features fell, and his limbs stiffened for ever. All was over: Alexis was no more—Euphrosyné avenged—and Anastasius the wretch he had long deserved to be!

I shed no tears; I moaned not; I made myself not a spectacle for the gaping multitude: but, ordered to the lazaretto, I threw my cloak over what had been my heart's best treasure, and, with the sacred burthen in my arms, silently proceeded to where I was shown my temporary prison. There, in the lonely cell allotted for my more favoured confinement, I found leisure to make myself acquainted with my grief, and to contemplate in its altered—its new condition, that countenance, that form, and those features, once all the company I coveted upon this globe, and now leaving me in solitude, though placed by my side.

At the outset of my voyage from the East, when, on recovering my scattered senses, the first object which met my eyes was my adored child, after infinite toil and misgivings at last safe in my possession, I had in all the ecstasy of unutterable joy fallen on my knees beside the sweet babe, wrapt in soft slumbers before me. Now, at the close of the same voyage, and arrived at the place of my long looked-for

destination, but with my hopes entirely blasted, my happiness destroyed, and the being for whom all was undertaken and achieved no more, I knelt a second time in all the agony of grief beyond utterance beside that same beloved boy again lying before me, but—a breathless corpse! At first, indeed, I gazed as if insensible of the awful change. My mind was so confused, so bewildered, that, perhaps from excess of grief, I seemed not to feel at all, and could only upbraid myself for my strange insensibility. My imagination refused to conceive that lovely frame, so lately still the seat of the warmest affection and the tenderest piety, as nothing now but a clod of icy clay, unconscious of my anguish, insensible to my embrace. Steadfastly as I contemplated my wretchedness, it was so great that neither eye nor intellect could compass its extent—and for a while I thought I must be labouring under some dreadful dream, whose illusion would vanish, and whose end would be my waking.

But when, from the object immediately before me, I carried my eye to more distant points, to wider circles of time and space;—when I reflected that on my child alone I had built all my remaining prospects of earthly comfort and joy; that for my child alone I had left my country, home, and friends, and had come to encounter strange regions, climes, and people; that to my child's converse alone I looked for all the solace of what few days might still be vouchsafed me, as well as to his piety for the few flowers that at my death might deck my bier; that in his beloved arms I had hoped to breathe my last; nay, that a thousand times in the idle fancies of my entranced brain I had flattered myself with leaving him such a blessing to the world as by the virtues of the son to atone for the sins of the father, and to cause the sire himself to be blessed in his offspring; and when from these excursions of my distracted mind I reverted to what was left me of these fond and foolish visions—then it was that my grief at last forced its way through the weight of bodily stupor by which it seemed compressed, and that the flood-gates of my tears, long locked, at last burst open. Then did my increased agony find vent, and no longer wear the semblance of a stonelike apathy.

It was not my child whose change demanded pity. He had, indeed, by my ill-fated fondness, been torn from a scene of every bliss which could surround his tender years. From a nursery of comforts he had been taken

by force on a journey of privations and perils, and his series of youthful sufferings had ended in a painful illness and a premature death: but what of that? Heaven, it has long been acknowledged, marks its favourites by an early removal from this abode of sorrow. My child's short cares were over; and his irksome career closed at its very outset. He had quitted a world of bitterness and corruption, ere yet his susceptible heart had felt its cruel thorns, or his pure mind had been sullied by its foulness. Called away while in the gay spring of his existence, tears only soft as April showers had yet bedewed his rosy cheeks; he had been wafted on high, still robed in all the brightness of his native innocence, and, ere his guileless mind could yet have lost aught of its holiness, he had joined his brother angels in the realms of bliss eternal. There—while his father was still struggling on the stormy sea of life—he, already safe from ill, dwelt in endless glory in the bosom of his Maker.

But I—I alone remained oppressed by a weight of wo unutterable! Partly by chance, partly from my own fault, every relation, every friend, every common acquaintance with which I had commenced life—estranged by degrees through my own wayward conduct—had left me a being wholly insulated, precisely at that age when, weaned from a deceitful world, man begins to want comfort at home. Frightened at my increasing loneliness, I had in my turn looked out for a something on which to bestow those affections, doomed to run to waste just as they begin to rise. Long I sought—often fancied I held—and often again either rejected or lost the prize. At last Heaven seemed to smile upon a blameless feeling. After much anxiety and sore disappointment, I found the wished-for object—and found it in my own child, long severed from my arms.

Him I beheld where I could least have expected it; him, after much fear and doubt, I regained; and him I thenceforth destined to become my only solace—the support and the joy of my remaining life. That with regard to this last and dearest treasure of my soul I had, for once, acted up to my fair intentions, and fulfilled all my duties, my heart bore me witness. From the moment I obtained possession of my Alexis, he became the sole object of my unceasing solicitude, the sole theme of my constant contemplation. Casting off all other thoughts, spurning far away from me all other vain pursuits; no

longer caring for aught of which he was not the sole end and motive, nor engaging in aught which promoted not his benefit, I devoted to him all the strength of my body, and all the powers of my mind: I watched over his development by day and by night.

Heaven seemed for a while determined to reward with its utmost liberality so irreproachable a sentiment. Almost from the first hour of my possessing him, I reaped every day some fresh fruit of my care, and received earnestly every day of far richer fruits still ripening. My Alexis possessed exquisite faculties; and the slightest culture sufficed to elicit them. At first, indeed, he had looked upon me as an enemy; as one who had torn him forcibly from his friends: but at last—and when convinced by my tenderness of the excess of my affection—he had realized all my long trembling hopes; had fulfilled in every way all my most ardent wishes; had begun to return my undivided fondness with all the fervour of his own affectionate disposition. No child ever doted on a mother as he did on his father: and, if our love even becomes riveted to an object by the mere unrequited care and pains bestowed upon it, how unbounded became, with the return which I experienced, my adoration of my angel child, need or can I describe! He alone was the joy of my eyes, and the pride of my vainglorious heart; and as I walked forth with him in public—as I saw every stranger gazing on his lovely countenance, smiling at his playful prattle, and almost spellbound by the charm that seemed to hover around his person, parental exultation swelled that foolish heart within me, and made my eyes overflow with rapturous delight. I seemed only to move along for the purpose of enjoying a constant triumph.

Nay, that parental fondness which, bearing in all its parts on one single point, and in that single point finding the firmest support, must, under any circumstances, have acquired an unexampled intensity, had still its growth accelerated beyond the ordinary measure by the peculiarities of my anomalous condition.

That very same instant which had on Egypt's barren shore brought my labours for the possession of my child to a happy conclusion, had also witnessed the beginning of my incessantly continued journey towards the distant point which was to be my final goal, and where I hoped to sit down at last in peaceful enjoyment of the treasures

I had won. From the momentous period which had seen my Alexis first pressed to my still panting bosom, every later successive day—nay, almost every successive hour—had beheld me wafted to some new point under the heavens, to some new latitude on the earth, wholly distinct and different from the preceding ones. No region, no city, no abode had since my departure from Alexandria afforded me a permanent sojourn, or fixed me long enough to excite in my breast the smallest local attachment, the least fondness of which I had not brought the seeds in my own bosom. Or should even in any place some slight interest have arisen, not unlawful in itself, and which might in a more stationary condition have been allowed to take some hold of my heart, have covered with some fair exotic the spots left bare by the native attachments eradicated, and have in some degree divided my affections with my soul's chief treasure—bereft from the ever-changing scene through which I hurried of all leisure for its cultivation, I had sedulously crushed its first shoots as those of an intruding and troublesome stranger.

But the more my state of incessant locomotion had thus made all else pass by unregarded, or unable to leave any permanent impression, the more had it caused my own child—my only, never-failing companion—to entwine himself with double force round every fibre of the paternal heart; for at the same time that that constant impulse forward which both sire and son obeyed had suffered no other object to enter into the smallest competition with my boy for my genuine affections, it had occasioned an uninterrupted closeness in our daily intercourse, had demanded on my part a minuteness of parental offices with respect to my child's little person, had given me a habit of unremittingly hearing his sweet voice, nay, had, amid all this seeming sameness of sentiments and impressions, thrown a variety in the places, the modes, and the circumstances of our relative existence and endearments, infinitely exceeding what any stationary condition, even with my Alexis—and no one else but him—ever clinging to my side, could have afforded. The short, the happy period of my life marked by the recovery of my Euphrosyné's last bequest had offered the treasure, not merely—as does in most cases so transient a possession—in one place, one pursuit, one form; it had offered my Alexis, while constantly placed in view, yet constantly in different form, and action, and mode of

being; it had offered him successively in Egypt, at Malta, in Sicily, at Naples, at Rome, at Ancona, and in every place either of repose or thoroughfare intervening between these distant points; it had offered him in capitals and on the road, at rest and in action; now gliding in a light skiff on the waves, now whirled on smoking wheels over hill and dale; now wondering at the sights of cities, now enjoying rural amusements and scenery; now in the simple garb of the infant traveller, now attired for the admiration of crowds; now all alertness, and rousing by his arch and playful caresses even his listless father; now himself oppressed with the fatigues of the journey, and asleep in my arms; and thus I had gone on from place to place, collecting and compressing in a small space a variety of pictures of his infantine person, pursuits, and adventures—all lovely, and yet all different—far beyond what the longest period of years could have accumulated in the slow changes of a stationary existence; and which, carefully treasured up in my memory, and always present to my imagination, had furnished by their multitude materials for an affection and a worship far exceeding what even tender parents, when distracted by a variety of ties, can find to divide among their numerous offspring; and at the eve of accomplishing my labours and reaching my destination, this all-absorbing adoration of a child in appearance not less full of bodily health than replete with moral excellence, was already ushering me into a scene of rapturous and yet lawful felicity, only expected to end with my own life, when all at once a Providence—mindful of my sins when I had forgotten them—had even reversed the course of nature to cut short that existence on which my own depended, to destroy at one blow my new and hard-earned happiness, and to leave me, from one possessed of all his heart desired, a forlorn wretch, in a strange country, and among a stranger race, with not one object to cling to on this side an obscure and lonely grave.

Yet with such dismal thoughts rending my mind, and the more dreary object laid out before my eyes, did the benumbing powers of affliction itself—of an affliction perfect in all its parts—and by no longer leaving room for hope or fear, no longer affording an excitement or permitting a struggle—at last procure me a short respite from its sting. Yielding to the torpor which by degrees came over my senses, I fell into a profound sleep, and the

trance lasted unbroken until the dawn of the following day; but the moment of waking was dreadful beyond all former moments. I had dreamed of my child; I had in the lying vision seen him convalescent; my heart's treasure had again seemed to revive, and to thank me for a care no longer wanted, when, awaking with a burst of joy, and turning round, I saw—O God of heavens!

I now afresh gave way to my despair; with frantic violence hugged to my bosom the cold corpse of my boy, and swore no earthly power should tear it from my arms, until by degrees the mild entreaties of my fellow-prisoners made my grief assume a less outrageous form.

After frequent relapses, I prepared to perform to my child's sad remains the last duties of a man, a Christian, and a father. In the gloomy precincts of the lazaretto I saw the narrow cell dug which henceforth was to hold all I cared for on earth. Then kissing for the last time those faded eyes which never more were to beam upon me, and those livid lips which no longer felt the pressure of mine, I suffered the dreary winding-sheet of death to shroud from my further view my angel's altered features, and carried him weeping to his last home. But when the moment came—after the priest had concluded his office—to lower into the foul jaws of the grave, and to resign to corruption that lovely body—that last relic of my short-lived felicity—I scarce felt courage for the dismal task. I clung to what I was going to lose, until fresh violence became necessary; and when over the idol of my boastful heart I again beheld the ground made like all other ground,—“Now, come,” cried I, “when it list, my own final hour! I shall hail it as the healer of sorrows—as the friend who springs forward to receive suffering man when all other friends depart!”

Sad indeed was the void which I found from those days when I could not go out even for a few minutes without paying the tribute of a farewell embrace, and could never come home without finding a sweet welcome awaiting me on the very threshold; when every look of sorrow I betrayed was met by filial sympathy, and every glance of satisfaction I gave filled my child's heart with gladness. Ah! while these raptures had been mine, the very confinement of a lazaretto had been a scene of joy; now that they were to be no more, the liberation from my prison only promised fresh grief!

Soon, however, the period of enlargement came; for

the quarantine had only been incurred by an untoward accident; and in a very few days I received a formal notice that its term had expired. Once more I went to the hallowed spot where lay buried all my hopes, and once more bedewed its turf with bitter tears; then, retiring with slow and lingering steps, I left the sad enclosure, and launched forth again into the haunts of men.

But I re-entered them without joy, as I did without anxiety. Things gone by no longer gave a value to things to come. The golden link by which the past had been connected with the future had been broken—been snapped asunder. The Anastasius of the morrow was no longer the Anastasius of the eve. The wide new world I was going to tread was a world devoid of interest; and the vast new prospects unfolding to my view were prospects without life, animation, or sunshine. Struck by Heaven's vengeful lightning, my soul saw nothing in the dark surrounding waste to cheer its deathlike sadness, and shrunk from every slightest exertion as from an Herculean labour. On every stone I met in my way I could have laid me down to die.

My only consolation consisted in the multiplicity of my sufferings, and in the sage speculations of the medical professors whom I consulted on my health, in order to get rid of the gratuitous prescriptions of the multitude; for though the members of the faculty seemed to think it likely that the effects of the storm at Melada, the anxious watching during my child's illness, and, more than all, the grief for his loss, might have very much aggravated the symptoms of the original complaint,—yet they agreed unanimously, that even without these additional circumstances, the internal injury received on the beach at Alexandria—whether in the lungs, or the liver, or the spleen, no matter—must still alike have ended in my not very distant demise; and what cruel regret, what dire forebodings must have disturbed my deathbed, had I been obliged to leave my Alexis in a strange land, a helpless, unprotected orphan, exposed, not only to all the violence of the rapacious, but all the wiles of the profligate; and perhaps, in the weakness of unsuspecting childhood, not only stripped of his property, but despoiled—for ever despoiled of his more precious innocence, I even now shuddered to think of. The dread of such consequences must have rendered the last hour of my life the most painful of my existence. Instead of that, my child's short account

on earth was closed for ever, ere the least alloy of evil could dim his spotless purity. His bliss eternal was sealed beyond repeal. Of his endless happiness no doubt could any longer subsist. Self—worthless self was all I henceforth had to think of; and the pangs of that self alone to lessen if I could.

And even of these too well-deserved sufferings the sting was greatly blunted by the consciousness that their period was limited. My loneliness upon earth could not be of long duration; my punishment here below must soon end; nay, the very torments that might in the severity of eternal justice await me hereafter would be soothed by knowing that my child shared not in them; but while his father paid the penalty of his manifold offences, enjoyed in other realms the reward of his piety: and I sometimes even presumed to think, that perhaps, after so dire an affliction—so severe a trial—as that which concluded my earthly career, some portion even of my own heavy debt might be remitted; when the last moment of my stay here below, which the parting from my still earth-bound child must have rendered the most irksome of my life, would, by reuniting me for ever to my angel above, become the most blessed of my existence.

Meantime, a stranger in the place to which my destiny had brought me. and not ranking among those privileged children of the globe licensed to indulge to the utmost of their wish in every luxury, even unto that of grief,—I felt I must bestir myself, under pain of being, like a bruised reed, crushed and flung on the dunghill. Accordingly, I resolved, if dead to pleasure, at least to rouse myself to business; and hushing in my heart those deep sorrows which no one around me could share in or alleviate, to look, to speak, and to act in public like other men.

My first exertion was to inquire after the kindly intensioned kinsman whose invitation had brought me to Trieste, but whose existence I had for a time wholly forgotten. On waking from my trance, and remembering my relation, I rather wondered that he should not in my distress have been the first to seek me out. Alas! he too had since I last heard from him paid the debt of nature, and disabled me from paying that of gratitude. I say of gratitude; for though his will had been left in the main as it stood before my journey, it had been burthened with a handsome legacy in my favour, to soften my disappointment in case I should be found to have complied

with his summons. The bequest put me at once in possession of a considerable sum of ready money, when I would have wanted spirits to convert into cash my now loathed jewels.

Trieste, which I had before intended to make my permanent residence, was become since my misfortune the place least fitted for my abode. Not only the living multitudes of a commercial city had not leisure to sympathize with my situation, but the very inanimate objects it presented were of the sort most discordant with my present frame of mind. Those rocks which, left in their native ruggedness, would have harmonized with my gloomy feelings, here were only beheld shaped in bustling quays and busy wharfs; those forests which, abandoned to silence and solitude, might have favoured my melancholy musings, here were only to be viewed transformed into noisy hulks and naked masts. Gold was the only substance worshipped on this altar of Mammon, in its pure, primitive shape; but gold was precisely the only one which I would rather have seen by a later transformation converted into whatever could have given my mind a wholesome abstraction from its sorrows. I therefore thought, that if I returned at all among my fellow-creatures, it should only be where I found them collected in such myriads, as to recover, amid their overflowing crowd, all the privileges of solitude. Upon this principle, Vienna became destined in my mind for my ultimate abode.

While I staid at Trieste, however, people would insist upon diverting me. It was a difficult undertaking, with my mind full of sorrow, and an abscess forming in my side. Once only, finding myself somewhat easier than usual, I abruptly left my couch, and indulged my curiosity by going to a party.

I own, that when launched into its vortex, and beholding a number of figures towards whom I felt no attraction either of kindred, country, or even common interests, amusements, or language, whirl around me in idle hurry, nay, sometimes stop in the midst of their insane bustle to look at myself, to point me out to each other, and to see how my adventures sat upon me;—reflecting, moreover, how soon even this mere spectacle must to me cease altogether,—I felt a sort of pleasure. But it was the pleasure of one who wanders in the delusion of a morning dream, through imaginary meads and gardens, among phantoms flitting about him in their twilight revels; and

who feels all the while that they only wait to glide off and disappear for that approaching dawn which must break his sleep, and cause his final waking among scenes and beings wholly different.

Loath to leave the place where slept my Alexis, and for ever to quit the last shore to which my child had been wafted—finding my only solace in listening day after day, on the quay facing the lazaretto, to the surf beating against its piers in slow and solemn pulses, I do not know how long I might still have remained at Trieste, taking no account of time, but, while ever intending to go, ever putting off my journey, had not the fear of travelling late in the season made me resolve, before the summer should wholly pass by, to secure my winter-quarters.

Not long, therefore, after the memorable treaty of Campo Formio, which filled Trieste with joy, by sacrificing Venice, a brilliant autumn eve saw brought to their conclusion the short preparations for my departure the next morning.

My bills paid, my passports signed, my post-horses ordered,—having nothing further to think of or settle in the place I was leaving, I went to take my last turn on my favourite quay.

The sun was just dropping behind the purple expanse of the Adriatic, and I indulging my favourite dream, that perhaps the glorious luminary, which not only through its constant emanations supports the inferior surrounding planets, but by its central situation is itself exempted from all the vicissitudes they suffer, might be the first halting-place of the blessed that depart from other orbs, and in its bright bosom might harbour my own Alexis, when I was diverted from this object of vague and distant contemplation by one less remote—namely, two persons, apparently just released from quarantine, who were advancing towards the city and, consequently, towards me. They wore the Greek dress, and, common as the sight was at Trieste, it yet engaged my attention as one which would become rare on my impending removal. Of the two strangers, the shortest particularly attracted my notice. As he approached, a crowd of confused images rushed upon my mind. I almost fancied I saw—, but the thing seemed improbable; and yet at every successive step which brought him nearer, the impression, so far from lessening,

acquired greater strength, until at last I grew quite convinced of its truth. The person I gazed upon must be—it was Spiridion! Spite of his darker complexion, and his more manly form, I no longer could doubt I beheld the friend of former days. As to himself, intent upon the surrounding scenery, he would have passed me by unheeded, but for my stopping directly in his way, in order to take one more silent survey of his person, ere I ventured to hail my long-estranged companion.

Thus pointedly approached, he looked at me in his turn, first indeed with an expression only of surprise, at being thus scrutinized, apparently by a Frank, but, by degrees, with a more fixed stare, as of one under a delusion which he strives in vain to shake off. He gazed alternately on my features, which proclaimed an old friend, and on my dress, which bespoke an entire stranger.

Human patience could hold out no longer: “Am I then so changed,” cried I, “that even my Spiridion cannot recognise his Anastasius?”

My voice was still the same. At its once familiar sounds the son of Mavrocordato seemed seized with a sudden thrilling, and again stepped back; but this time in wonder—in amazement.

“And is it then really,” cried he at last, “Anastasius I behold?”

Nothing but the diffidence, tardy offspring of misfortune, had prevented me, the moment I recognised my friend, from clasping him in my arms. Could I have suspected that, without the same cause on his part, he would have evinced a similar hesitation to press me to his bosom, no temptation would have induced me to make myself known. I would have let him pass by unstayed; and never—no! never would I again, with my consent, have thrown myself in his way. His cold reception chilled me to the heart, and paralyzed my tongue. Spiridion saw me appalled, and Spiridion enjoyed the sight! Without one single word to relieve my embarrassment, he waited in solemn silence my tardy and faltering speech. His looks seemed to say, “Each his turn; yours came first.” Yet even in this I acquit him of every cold and calculating motive. His conduct, I am certain, arose from resentiment, not from meanness.

But whatever was the cause, “Spiridion,” cried I, as

soon as I felt able to speak, "your searching eye need not tell me what I already know too well. I no longer am he who looked defiance at all on earth, and at heaven itself. Sickness and sorrow have bent me to the ground;" and, overcome by my recollections, I burst into tears.

A blush of shame now tinged Spiridion's features; he stammered an excuse; and telling me where he meant to lodge, begged I would call upon him; but awkward in his very apologies, he only, in trying to withdraw the dagger thrust into my bosom, gave me fresh pangs. I inclined my head to thank him, but raised it with a glance of conscious independence, which I left him to digest, and darted away.

As soon as he was out of sight I turned back and went home. All my business at Trieste was concluded. I determined to set off immediately. My chaise was brought round, the horses put to it, and my trunks fastened on.

Among the stones reserved from Khedieh was a singularly beautiful ruby. Often pressed to sell the precious gem, I had always refused to part with my carbuncle. It had been set apart to please my own eye—perhaps, some day, to purchase a powerful patron. But to pleasure I was become indifferent, and I no longer needed an earthly patron. I slipped the sparkling stone, wrapped up in paper, between the folds of Spiridion's pocket-book, which till now had never been out of my bosom, and, putting the whole under cover, sent it to him with the following superscription:—

"To one who for his friend once gave up all, and whose devotion is best remembered when it no longer can avail, Anastasius, rich in worthless jewels, poor in all besides, sends this last token of ancient affection and of endless gratitude."

No sooner was the parcel out of my sight, than I too departed.

CHAPTER XXII.

It was my intention to have travelled all night ; but at the second stage want of horses stopped my progress. I therefore desired some refreshment, a fire, and a bed. The stove was lighted, a slice of cold meat set before me, between a bottle of wine and a flask of more potent spirits ; and in answer to the last of my requests, the female who acted as waiter pointed to a huge mountain of eiderdown in a corner of the room.

Having finished my supper, and hanging over the slowly-warming stove, I insensibly fell into a review of all the various and motley vicissitudes which had marked my portion of that changeful dream called human life :—First, I went back to its remotest periods, to those spent in the place of my nativity ; played over all the gambols of my infancy, and all the frolics of my boyhood ; viewed in its minutest details the paternal abode, remembered the most trivial incidents of the family circle, and heard the peculiar sound of voice of each of its members—their gossip, their scolding, and their loud peals of laughter—with a distinctness and proximity which left the memory of the more important events of later years comparatively vague, dark, indistinct reminiscences. With the rekindling of my youngest flame, and with the retracing of my earliest flight—that disgraceful flight which cut me off from all connexion with the land of my birth, and entirely divided the first stage of my life from all its later periods—I closed the first chapter of my history.

Scarce could my heart even now refrain from bounding, as I recalled the rapturous intoxication of my spirits, when, in the morning of my day—like the young pilgrim with locks flowing in the wind, and wallet carelessly flung across the shoulder—I set out upon the second stage of my journey through life : when, simply but smartly attired, the soft down just budding on my lips, and the infant hopes expanding in my mind, I went forth with erect crest and buoyant step, in quest of pleasure and of fame ; and finally, when in the Morea, reaping an

ample harvest of both, I achieved my first prowess, and heard my first praises. Hassan's lip had long been silenced by death; but the music of his applause still rung in my ears.

Launched next into the maddening vortex of the capital, I still smiled at the recollection of the Jew doctor, shuddered at that of the Bagnio, and, though quite alone, averted my eyes as from a spectre, on remembering Anagnosti, pale, bloody, and with my murderous dagger buried in his breast! To fly the ghastly image I crossed the main, roamed in the plains of Egypt, and, after seeing myself successively a *kiachef* rioting in luxury, and an outcast fleeing for his life, I in turns became an humble *hadjee* crawling on his knees at Mekkah, and a conceited coxcomb sporting his saucy wit at Stamboul.

Now rose predominant the figure of my friend Spiridion! I mean the Spiridion all heart, all affection, of former days—between whom and his namesake of yesterday the connecting link seemed wanting. Parted, by my own fault, from my only real friend, I again roved, successively a soldier of fortune at Cairo, a warrior in Wallachia, and a merchant on the Bosphorus.

But Ismir!—But Euphrosyné! The thought harrowed up my soul. To pluck the gnawing worm from my bosom, I plunged into the deepest desert, and joined the most daring of sectaries. At last, become a tender husband, I suffered for my sins in my amendment, and soon consigned to earth a fond and virtuous wife, when—spurned by one friend as I had spurned another—I fled to Arabs less godly but less faithless than the Wahabees, and, under their new banners, founded my worldly fortune in the plains of Khedieh. Growing a coward as I grew rich, I pursued, loaded with rubies and clothed in rags, my solitary course towards the setting sun, until casting off my slough in the concealment of the capital, I flew on the wings of parental love to the coast of Egypt;—and at Alexandria sought, saw, and won my child!

Oh! that I could here end my last chapter: that, to so many friends and relations, protectors and protected, one after the other swept away from the earth, I had not to add—but so it was!—and now, with all that I looked forward to of joy, of pride, and of stay, laid prostrate for ever, I had nothing left me but to sink irretrievably

under one of those sorrows the more corroding because they are unshared, unnoticed, unimagined by the surrounding throng;—and to waste away my small remains of life in tears, resembling the rain-drops that fall into the sea, untold, unheeded, and without leaving a trace.

Such was the feeling of sad, of entire abandonment in which my reflections terminated, that, to drive them away and to warm my withered heart, I rapidly drank off several draughts of the spirits placed beside me: after which, without undressing, I crept under the swelling featherbed, desiring I might be called the instant the horses—expected home in the night—were ready to take me on.

In bed I found sleep, but not repose. A feverish restlessness insensibly grew, as it were, into a continuation of the last adventures of my life. I fancied myself dead, and lying in my coffin. The dim tapers already cast around the funereal glare which was to light my stiffened body to the darkness of the grave. Yet had I a faint perception of what was going forward. My limbs indeed were immoveable; but my eyes beheld, and my ears retained the power of hearing.

First appeared, as in a twilight, the persons most closely linked to my existence: my parents, Helena, Mavroyeni, and others. Their busts—for nothing more of them was perceptible—seemed floating in air. Sometimes they advanced, as if to take a nearer look at my countenance, gazed some time on me in silence, and then again retired, making room for others, who in their turn performed the same evolutions, and, after sating their curiosity, equally vanished in space. Two persons only of the mute assemblage remained, after all the rest had disappeared. At first they presented no features which I recognised, but insensibly they assumed the resemblance, the one of Euphrosyné, the other of a venerable priest with a long snow-white beard, whom I had seen at Pera. Euphrosyné began by contemplating me awhile, like all the phantoms that had preceded her, in total silence, and though seeming to smile sweet forgiveness on her unfeeling ravisher, wore a funereal look which thrilled me to the soul. She repeatedly beckoned to me with emphatic gesture to join her: but each time my leaden limbs refused to do their office. At last the old man spoke. “In vain,” he cried, “you try to meet. Your paths in life ever lay too far asunder.”

"Ah!" now exclaimed in her turn the weeping maiden; whose voice, till then unheard, thrilled me to the soul:—"if he cannot come to me, I can at least go to him!"—and with outstretched arms she sprung forward to share my darker destiny; but her lifeless form only fell like a millstone on my chest. Gasping for breath, I struggled to disengage myself from the intolerable load—when, suddenly, what I held in close embrace no longer was Euphrosyné, but—the fiend Sophia!

Rage now swelled my breast, as fury flashed from the eyes of my antagonist. The lion and the serpent grappled. Each fixed his fangs in the other's quivering flesh; each strove to pluck the heart from the other's bleeding bosom: until at last the baseless ledge on which we fought in air gave way with a tremendous crash.

Twined in each other's arms, down we now sank together; and I continued falling, until I woke at last in inexpressible horror, and found myself lying on the floor of the room, weltering in a stream of real blood, drawn forth from my vitals by my unconscious exertions. The confusion of my ideas just left me time enough to rejoice that I had only been dreaming, ere returning perception brought to my remembrance how much there was in my dream of sad reality.

Scarce inferior to the fancied music of the spheres themselves sounded at that moment in my stunned ear the hoarse note of the horn, which informed me that the driver was seated on his horse. Ill as I felt, I thought I could not get away too fast. The postmaster, indeed, had informed me of a novelty, only witnessed since these before peaceful regions had become the seat of war: namely, robbers prowling in the neighbourhood. But who durst lay unhallowed hands on the already sentenced criminal! My death-warrant, long signed, kept my life charmed, until the fatal hour of its lawful execution; and evil glances fall not more innocuous on spirits broken with sorrow, than would the deadliest dagger on my heavy heart, already turned to stone by grief.

Disregarding, therefore, every entreaty and sinister foreboding of the landlord and his crew, I wrapped myself in my cloak, stepped into my calesh, and spite of the still undiminished darkness, rolled on again with renovated speed.

All that day and all the ensuing night I continued travelling without interruption; for, greatly as I wanted

rest, I could nowhere bring myself to stop. It was only in proportion as I felt my body whirled along with greater speed, that my mind seemed to find somewhat more repose. A mysterious impulse, as it were, goaded me on without ceasing.

The sun of the third day was already lengthening the partial shadows that precede its disappearance, when I entered an extended heath, to whose beautiful and varied weeds heaven's declining luminary at that instant lent the glowing transparency which announces its proximate setting. With singular force did the gaudy scene revive all the deep-felt impressions which one of a similar description had once made on my younger mind in the plains of Ak-hissar; or rather, it produced one of those moments in my life, when my sensations became so exactly the counterpart of what they once had been at some definite prior period, perhaps long gone by, as to suggest the idea of my having, in a new point of space, reverted to an already experienced point of time; and of my going over afresh some former portion of my existence, already elapsed.

And, in fact, may not things created perform circles in time as they do in space? May not the limited scope of our present perceptions be alone the cause that prevents our embracing the vast revolutions produced by duration, as we compass the smaller circuits performed within the equally inconceivable boundaries of extension? and may not one of the brightest prerogatives of that more perfect promised state, when time is said to cease, consist in that removal of its partial barriers, through means of which we shall be permitted equally to see the past in the future, and the future in the past?

Be that as it may, no scene could, in the splendour of its detail, exceed the one which my mind thus irresistibly retraced. Every where a carpet of anemones, hyacinths, and narcissuses covered the undulating ground. The oleander, the cistus, and the rhododendrons, blushing with crimson blossoms, marked the wide margins of the diminished torrents; glowing heaths, odoriferous genistas, thyme, lavender, and jasmine started from every fissure of the marble-streaked rock; while its surface was clothed in a moss of emerald green, through which trickled diamond drops of never-failing water. Alternate tufts of arbutus, and mimosa, and bay, intermixed with the wild rose and myrtle, canopied the beetling brow of

the crag ; but from the deep bosom of the dell between, shot up out of the richer soil, like stately pillars supporting a ceiling of fretwork, the ilex, the poplar, and the wide-spreading plane. Here and there a presumptuous creeper—wily sycophant, raised by his very pliancy—overwhelmed with parasitic blossoms the topmost boughs of the tree on which it fastened ; and from its supporter's mighty limbs again fell in gay festoons to the ground. The air was loaded with fragrance ; birds of every hue balanced their light forms on the bending twigs, and myriads of gilded insects emulated in brilliancy the flowers round whose honeyed cup they hovered.

Yet, while other artists prize their meanest productions, nature often seems to set so little value upon her choicest works, that this paradise lay in a secluded nook, far, not only from the more beaten track of the traveller, but even from the haunts of the thinly-scattered natives. No path ran through it in any direction ; its very outskirts were scarce ever pressed by the foot of man, and its inmost recesses had not, perhaps, for centuries been darkened by his shadow. Every where the most lovely plants sprung up, and again faded every year, without a single instant meeting the human eye ; but the concealment of these wonders produced not the least slackening in their progress ; the activity of nature was not checked or diminished by the ignorance of man ! Still did each later season see each varied form of vegetation, reckless of human blindness, expand at its due period, blow its full time in all its wonted splendour, and perform every successive function of its maturation and seeding, as it had done each former year.

Had I thence only inferred how little that self-assumed lord of the creation, man, goes for in the eyes of Providence, even on that very globe of which he calls himself the supreme master, and which he considers as created for his sole use and purposes, the induction would probably have been just, though thus far little consoling ; but I went further. Since it seemed incompatible with all-perfect wisdom that wonders capable of affording exquisite delight should be endlessly renewed only to be endlessly unenjoyed, endlessly wasted, I inferred that even our own humble globe might be visited, unknown to us its ostensible tenants, by higher beings than ourselves, hovering in purer forms over their primitive haunts, and mixing unperceived with their still mortal kindred. Who

could tell that the spirit of my own Alexis—wafted on the sun's untiring beams from its higher abode—might not at times flit among them; might not have sat on yon fair tulip which I so fondly gazed upon, and which bent its graceful head as I slowly passed by.

But time runs short! I may not dwell on such rambling reflections—I must hasten on to the goal.

Some little perverse incidents, indeed, seemed now and then to start up on very purpose to keep it longer in prospect. My carriage broke down at one place: in another I myself was stunned by a fall:—but these incidental rubs affected me no longer. The single deep affliction which encompassed my heart served as an impenetrable ægis against all lesser ills. It rendered me impervious to their superficial punctures. Never emerging from that twilight in which there are no partial shades, since there are no partial lights, my mind, no longer accessible to hope, no longer felt the pressure of disappointment.

A little before the dawn of the fourth day, however, there arose a somewhat singular circumstance, which affected me sufficiently to give a new direction to my movements. A pretty sharp ascent had made me alight among the Carinthian hills, to walk a few yards, and shake off the morning chill, by which I felt quite benumbed. The road lay across a dark forest of firs, whose outline already was marked by the pale light of the morning against the cold gray sky, but whose deep bosom still presented unbroken all the black and mysterious indistinctness of night. The trees in their funereal hues seemed sable mourners, gliding in long procession down the hills, to range themselves on my passage: the bleak winds breathed through their waving boughs deep and mournful sighs; and the torrent, dashed from rock to rock, roared with hollow murmur in the chasm below.

All at once I heard—or thought I heard—in the wood a dismal moan, as from one in pain. I stopped, held my breath, turned my ear the way whence proceeded the sound, and, from within a close thicket not thirty yards distant, fancied some one addressed me in the following words:—"Speed on, Anastasius; thou hast not far to go."

My blood curdled in my veins: a chill of terror, thus far unknown, crept all over my person; I felt an inward shudder—yet I determined to look bold. But though I dashed like one delirious among the rustling bushes, I found no trace of mortal man!

My first attempt was to laugh off the incident. No one joined in my uninfected mirth; and soon the forced smile died away on my own lips.

Whether, however, the ominous words had actually vibrated on my ears, or had only rung in my heated brain, what did it signify? There needed not an express message from the shades below to inform me that my company was waited for: that, with a frame rent at every joint, I was at best but a vampire, only permitted to walk among the living until the last awful summons should fix it for ever among the vaster myriads already under ground. After a long period of very little change in my bodily state, I had felt my sufferings increase so rapidly, since the fatal dream at the first stage from Trieste, that I could almost, by the regular and distinct progress of my declension, compute the utmost term I might reach, and the hour at which my last sand must run out, and make me bid this world farewell.

And little, in truth, did I reckon the circumstance which had thus narrowly circumscribed my fate. Even in my fullest vigour both of body and of mind, I had often prayed that I might not grow old—had endeavoured only to crowd events so thickly within the span of my existence, that its varied recollections might make my career, however short, appear longer on retrospect than the longest life of a dull undistinguished uniformity. “Rather,” had I often exclaimed, “let me even be felled to the ground, while an ample store of verdant boughs, waving in the breeze, may yet grace my sudden fall, than be permitted to wither on my stalk, unable to offer any attraction, or to resent any injury, and indebted as for an obligation to those who merely suffer my presence. Let me not outlive all those from whom I might have obtained a passing tear, only to excite derision in those destined to outlive me!”

And now that health and spirits were already drained to the last drop; now that, cankered by an inward worm, each bough, already withered, hung drooping to the ground, and not even a shoot remained to cheer by its later spring my own untimely autumn;—now that both what I loved best and what I hated most had already attained the final goal before me—could I still wish to live—to live alone in the universe, without a spark of affection or even of animosity left, to light with its fire my last lingering steps: could I brook to stand, like the scathed oak in the wilderness, a conspicuous monument of Heaven’s fiercest wrath?—God forbid!

Then what was the use of torturing my worn-out frame, only to seek far away what I might find so near? I could die any where.

Immediately I formed my resolution. Two stages back I remembered being struck by the appearance of a fir-clothed cottage, close to a country-town, whose few inhabitants—kept up somewhat later than usual by some holyday festivity—had attracted my notice by their cheerful clusters. “Might not,” thought I, “that gold, now become so indifferent to its weary possessor, obtain me the loan of this coveted habitation, for the short time my body wanted one above ground?”

This I determined to try: but found obstacles to my scheme even sooner than I had expected. My driver was of the true German breed—an automaton, who, throughout the whole length of his stage, could only move according to the impulse received on setting out. The advantage of receiving full payment for a task only half performed was what his brain refused to conceive: only, he never had heard of people stopping half-way on their journey, to turn back to whence they came; and he never should—God helping—lend his assistance to such an innovation. The cane was shaken in vain at this imperturbable idiot—even the pistol’s threatening muzzle made to exert its dumb oratory close to his ear without the smallest effect. The immoveable *schwager* would rather be shot dead on the spot than submit to become instrumental in the nefarious deed of turning his horses’ heads: so that my servant had to pull him at last off his brother brute, and to usurp his lawful place, ere I could effect my retrograde movement:—nor did I consider this as one of the least achievements of my life.

Equally arduous did I, on my return to L——, find the main business which brought me back. The owners of the cottage—dull, plodding people like the postboy—wanted time to consider of my singular proposal. They could not resolve on such a measure in a hurry: and the first determination they were able—after much hesitation—to come to, only consisted in a promise of the habitation at a period so remote, that I must have taken possession of a more lasting mansion long ere it arrived. Even when afterward the wary couple agreed—on the strength of my ill looks and hollow cough—to let me have the hovel immediately for the whole term of my life, they still evinced some desire of inserting, as a clause in the lease, *when* I was to die. At last, however, through

dint of constantly enhancing my offers, all difficulties were overcome. I took possession of my cot; and my tenacious landlord went away, half-grumbling at his good bargain, half-grinning at my strange whim, and wondering at the stranger price I paid for its indulgence.

The last stage of my terrestrial journey thus achieved, the last place of halting on this side the house to be changed no more thus occupied, I immediately made the few arrangements necessary for the comfort of my transient abode, and sent for a physician from the neighbouring town, to render my bargain as little losing as possible. On examining my symptoms, the sage shook his head, and judiciously observed that I might linger a good while yet, or might die very soon: but would do well, at all events, to take his medicine. This I received, but took care not to waste on my incurable ailments: notwithstanding which cautious conduct, my weakness soon increased to such a degree, that a walk round my garden became an exertion.

Near me lived a young couple, whom my other neighbours made the constant theme of their praise—and most disinterested it seemed; for the husband had only gained, by serving his country as a soldier, some severe and painful wounds, while the wife had lost, by preferring the wounded soldier to a hale peasant with a heavy purse, the countenance of all her kindred. In return, she had secured the smiles of a large family of her own; and her only embarrassment was how to give her children bread. Of love alone there remained a most plentiful store: but even of this ingredient it was difficult to say whether, by rendering each consort an object of constant anxiety to the other, it alleviated their sufferings or increased their solicitude.

To get sight of these worthy people was not so easy as it might seem. They were proud: they liked not a stranger to witness their honourable indigence, and they dreaded the importunate offer of his superfluity. Even when at last—through dint of unabating perseverance—I obtained leave to visit them, they showed the greatest ingenuity in eluding the drift of my visits. With respect to the state of their finances they were downright hypocrites. One would have supposed they wanted for nothing. Fate, however, ordained me to collect from their own mouths—without any thanks to their candour—the most practicable mode of relieving their necessities.

Once, on a Sunday evening, as the husband, at rest from the week's labour, and with only the weight of his own little wife hanging on his arm, had sat listening across the fence which divided our properties to the narrative of some of my adventures, and had heard with equal awe and concern how the soundest parts of my life had been full of death-spots; how pride, passion, love, and hatred—every feeling, every lure, and every stimulus—had in turns swayed my existence with such ill-poised force, that each during its reign wholly silenced all the rest, until, exhausted by indulgence, each again left its rivals to take a dire revenge; how by my own ingenuity I had contrived ever to render useless all the gifts profusely showered upon me; and how, finally, my whole life had been a struggle with a bounteous Providence, which should do and which undo the most:—the little woman at the conclusion of the story fetched a deep sigh, and the husband hereupon giving her a sharpish look, she with a blush observed, what a pity it was a tale so eventful and so strange should remain unrecorded—Conrad was so good a penman!

At first I spurned the idea. I had, indeed, learned a little of the world, and at my cost; but of composition I knew nothing; and though in my days of buoyancy and conceit I might frequently have planned to gratify the world with my motley memoirs, in my days of humiliation and weakness I recoiled from the arduous task. That very weakness, however, at last persuaded me. I was no longer able to take any exercise, and I wanted some occupation sufficiently interesting to prevent a still restless mind from preying upon a feeble and failing body. Besides, I own that I felt a faint wish not to let oblivion wholly blot out of man's remembrance the name of Anastasius. Nor could the scheme encounter great difficulty on the score of the difference of idiom between me and my destined secretary: for Conrad, educated as a gentleman, had moreover acquired in his campaigns a sufficient knowledge of the French language—our thus far ordinary medium of communication—to write in it correctly what I should dictate.

If, therefore, I still only caught at the proposal slowly; if I still awhile made a show of outward reluctance survive my inward assent, it was only to obtain on my own terms the assistance proffered—and to extort a right to estimate, at least in a limited degree, my obligations to

my scribe, as merchants do the services rendered by their correspondents;—a proceeding, however, so haughtily rejected at first, that I must have despaired of success, but for the soft whisperings of pity in the bosom of my new friends. They saw my frame waste away so fast, that at last they blushed to let an unseasonable—I may say an unsympathizing—delicacy, any longer deprive my few remaining days of their only solace; and permitted me to name them in my will. This I eagerly did, and then committed to their care my person and my fame. No sooner was the bargain thus struck than we sat down. I dictated—more or less at a time, according to my strength and spirits—Conrad wrote: and this is the fruit.

Upon the whole, the task has afforded me a salutary relief from the tedium of my constrained situation. Only when I have happened, while ruminating upon my own affairs, to cast my eyes upon my honoured scribe—who sits there smiling to be thus himself unexpectedly brought forward, while waiting with uplifted pen the sequel of my meditations—and chanced to catch the stolen glances of affection exchanged between him and his amiable helpmate, working by his side—some drops of bitterness would mix even with this last pleasure. “Such,” thought I, “might have been my own fate with my Euphrosyné; and such also—” but already Conrad’s incipient frown cheeks my digressing any further.

Once or twice, indeed, increasing weakness has been near putting a stop to my work in the midst of its progress. Each time, however, the performance was, after a short interruption, again duly resumed—and Heaven has at last permitted its completion.

At thirty-five I here complete its last page and sentence. At thirty-five I take leave of all further earthly concerns: at thirty-five I close—never more to reopen it—the crowded volume of my toilsome life. In a few weeks, days—perhaps hours—will for ever drop over my person, my actions, and my errors the dark curtain of death—when nothing will remain of the once vain and haughty Anastasius, but an empty name and a heap of noisome ashes.

O ye who tread their scattered remnants!—ere you execrate that name, the theme of so much obloquy, remember my sufferings: be merciful to my memory,—and may Heaven’s mercy rest upon yourselves!

Here ends the author's own narrative: what follows has been added from the account of the gentleman he names Conrad.

Anastasius, having completed the last pages of his memoirs with great effort only, fell almost immediately after into an irremediable languor. Every day that dawned now threatened—or rather promised—to be his last: for his existence was become so full of misery, that his end seemed desirable. Yet could not his sufferings—intense as they were—for a moment subdue his fortitude. Never was he heard to utter a syllable of impatience or complaint. Whenever his debility permitted him to converse, the theme was his adored child. “Were my heart opened,” said he one day, “you would find his name inscribed in its core. In the winning of my Alexis I lost health and strength, but it was the losing of him which gave me the death-blow. Now that nothing more remains for me to do but to prepare for my exit, I could have wished—had I been a great man, enabled to indulge all his fancies—to be carried to the spot where he lies, there to breathe my last by his beloved side: but such luxuries an outcast, a homeless wanderer must not think of. Enough for me, when my hour is at hand, to have in his gentle spirit an angel on high, to intercede with his Father in heaven, for his mortal one departing this earth.”

The third morning after this speech, Conrad, coming in at an early hour, found not his patient, as usual, on his pillow. Anastasius had made shift to creep out of bed, and was kneeling before a chair on which rested his face. At first he seemed in a swoon:—but, discerning the approach of his friend, he held out his trembling hand to him, and, trying to raise his head, faintly cried out, “Heaven takes pity at last. Thanks, O thanks for all your goodness!” and immediately relapsed. After a second interval of apparent absence, a second fit of momentary consciousness followed, when Conrad, stooping, heard the poor sufferer utter, but in a voice almost extinct, “O my Alexis, I come!” and immediately saw his head fall forward again. Conrad now tried to lift him into bed, in order that he might be more at ease. There was no occasion: Anastasius was no more.

His body laid out—by those who owed to him their restoration to comfort and affluence—in a sort of state, was by them committed to its last mansion with some-

what more solemnity than he had desired. They inherited half his property; the other half had been bequeathed to the poor of the place; and, though stanch Roman Catholics, its inhabitants—it is said—still bless the memory of the young Greek.

Note.—The editor acknowledges that the effect produced by the loss of his child on a man like Anastasius seemed to him—even allowing for the peculiarity of the adventurer's situation—somewhat improbable, until in Mariner's account of Finow, king of the Tonga Islands, he found what power the feelings of nature will sometimes, among semi-barbarous nations, retain even over minds in other respects ferocious and pitiless.

THE END.



This book is **DUE** on the last
date stamped below

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AT
LOS ANGELES
LIBRARY

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 000 373 654 3

PR
4803
H4a
v.2

